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THE CHILDREN'S MEET
by Rosemary Carr-Ellison, aged 10
(Home Schoolroom)

I LIVE IN the North of Northumberland. There is often a children's meet at Howick Hall. Luckily we always manage to go to the children's meet, because Howick Hall is only about half a mile away from us. We have four ponies, but we cannot hunt one of them.

This year my big sister Eve rode the largest pony and my sister Joanna and I rode the other two ponies. We were lent a pony for my sister Carol called Trixy.

It was a very pleasant day for the hunt. The hounds did not kill while we were there. My sisters and I left the hounds when we were near Alnwick, but my eldest sister went on with the hounds.

When we arrived at Howick Hall it was about half past two. Carol put Trixy in the Hall stables and then walked home with us. When we arrived home Daddy said he would feed the two ponies and put them away; so we went into the house having enjoyed ourselves very much.

THE CROCUS FAIRY
by Susan Thomas, aged 9
(Ashbourne P.N.E.U. School,
Derby)

ONCE UPON A TIME there was a little fairy and her name was Ccous, the Crocus Fairy, she lived with her sister, Drop, in Fairyland.

One day the Fairy Queen decided to give a ball, and she invited Ccous and Drop who was the Snowdrop Fairy. Drop had a lovely frock to go to the ball in, but Ccous had no frock, and she began to cry, so Drop said 'Don't cry, its all right we'll make a frock.'

So they went to where all the spiders were coming out of their webs. They asked the spiders if they could have their webs, the spiders replied 'Yes please take them. So Drop and Ccous took the webs, and took them home and spun them into shining gossamer and then made it into the most beautiful dress.

Then Drop said 'Let us go and find some decoration for you.' So they went out again the next morning and found a shooting star. 'That will do for my head,' said Ccous. They went on still further and found some dew on the grass. Ccous picked some of it up and they twisted it into a pretty necklace. Then Drop picked up some more to take home to put on the dress.

In the evening they got dressed ready to go to the ball. 'You look really beautiful' said Drop. 'So do you,' replied Ccous. Then they got into their carriage drawn by two beautiful white rabbits.

The coachman, who was a hare, stopped outside the Palace, and Ccous and Drop got out, and went up to the door, and rang the bell. A footman opened the door, and asked to see their invitation. And he said 'Please come this way.'

The footman led them down many passages adorned with pictures and many ornaments and rich carpets.

They came at last into a large ballroom, and the footman at the door, at a word from the footman that was conducting Drop and Ccous, shouted 'Ccous the Crocus Fairy and Drop the Snowdrop Fairy.'

Ccous and Drop went up to the King and the Queen and the Prince of Fairyland who were sitting on their thrones and curtsied, and went away to a corner there were lots of other fairys and lords and ladies.

As soon as the rest of the guests had arrived the ball began. At the first sight the Prince had fallen in love with Ccous, and he danced with no-one else all the evening.

At the banquet he asked his father the King and his mother the Queen if he could marry her. They said 'Yes', and the Prince asked Ccous if she would marry him, she said 'Yes' and it was announced that Ccous the Crocus Fairy was going to marry the Prince of Fairyland.

At the same time the Duke of Hazelwood fell in love with Drop and he asked her to marry him she said 'Yes' and it was announced that the Duke of Hazelwood was going to marry Drop the Snowdrop Fairy.

So they where married and Drop became the Duchess of Hazelwood and Ccous became the Princess of Fairyland and they lived happily ever after.

RECOGNITION

by Margaret Drage, aged 18
(P.N.E.U. School, Queen's Gardens,
London, W.2).

The Phantom, as he wandered through the streets
Of London, found that city greatly changed.
The small, gay, friendly town he knew was gone
And in its place great concrete chasms ranged.

The people hurried by in endless haste
Clad in drab monotone devoid of grace.
Men jostled women and the strongest won,
For courtesy no longer marked the race.
The stately carriages and well-matched teams,
And liveried grooms of haughty wooden face
Like Cinderella's pumpkin coach were shrunk

To ill-kempt, over-loaded costers' carts,
Drawn by rough ponies of assorted parts
And indefatigably cheerful hearts.

He visited the houses of the great
Where noble lords, absorbed in show and strife,
Had thronged the lofty mansions and had played
One brilliant scene in London's motley life.

He found them closed and shuttered, quiet and still,
Dusty, neglected like out-dated tomes.
Ghosts lingered in the panelled shadowy halls,
Fearing to leave their hourly threatened homes,
Like hares crouched in the lessening band of wheat
Who hear the noise of their approaching fate,
And know that they have left their flight too late.

He passed on smooth broad roads through endless streams
Of strange mechanic monsters, whose bright glare
And fierce hate-filled crescendo followed him;
Nor could he find a haven anywhere.

He sought the homely places he had loved,
And found them grassy ruins, desolate.
He thought, I will return from whence I came
And leave this alien city to its fate . . .

But then he saw across the broken walls
Above the wreckage of his former home,
Invincible, unchanging and secure,
St. Paul's sprawled leonine beneath its dome.

He smiled . . . I thought my London was no more;
I could not find it in this foreign place;
I could not recognize its altered face
From any of my memories of yore.
But now I see my city, though it frown,
Stands like this great cathedral as before.

THE TALE OF A HOUSE.
TOLD BY ITSELF

by Ann Jackson, aged 12
(Home Schoolroom, Derbyshire)

I AM A small cottage ten miles away from any town. My coat is white washed and I have a roof thatched with Norfolk reeds.

I have four tiny windows in front and a little dormer window under the roof, and above all I have a lovely bright red front door with a great big knocker.

The family that lived with me for three years left about six months ago, and really I have never been so utterly miserable in all my life and that is a long time.

I am cold, so would you be if no fires had been lighted in you for six months, dirty too, because no one has cleaned me. The birds have made their homes in my roof and so I am a perfect little drudge. It is nearly Christmas time, how I long to be as pretty as I was this time last year. I had a lovely little tree all lighted with candles in my lounge, and the children hung coloured balls and presents all over my tree.

Last week a lovely car stopped at my front door, and what do you think? A lady and gentleman, a little girl about two years old and a tiny baby, also I must not forget him, a lovely little spaniel got out.

They came right into me and, almost at once, Rip, that was the dog's name came and lay by my fireplace, and I heard the lady say that he looked at home anyway.

Then my floors were stamped on to see if they were safe, and my old oak beams bumped to see if they wanted repair, but I was all safe and sound.

Next day a girl called Polly came and scrubbed my floors and lighted big log fires in all my rooms. How lovely it felt to be warm again. Yesterday afternoon my

family came to stay. A big van came to the door and emptied lots of lovely furniture into me, pretty chintzie curtains, thick fluffy rugs and carpets, plumpy cushions, pretty covers for my beds and some lovely furniture.

Happy voices were once again around me I felt as if I belonged to a family who really loved me. My windows shone because I was so happy. Last night whilst the family were having their tea, I heard them talking about me, I just had to listen although it is very rude.

Daddy told Mummy how glad he was to have found such a dear little house, just when they needed it so badly.

They planned to have a lovely time and a big tree at Christmas.

Oh! I am going to sleep so happily to-night and keep my little family warm and safe. My friends the snowflakes are coming down again to say how pleased they are that soon some little child will make a snowman with them in my garden.

So last of all a word of advice to you chaps who are as miserable as I was, 'Never lose hope'.

THE CAT THAT HAD A DREAM

by Anne Rushton, aged 10
(P.N.E.U. School, Rickmansworth)

KIMKINS WAS SITTING by the fire thinking. He was thinking about fish. He had had fish for his dinner. He thought how nice it would be if he could always have fish for dinner. He yawned and felt sleepy and fell asleep. The next thing he knew was that he was in mouse land and he was talking to King Mick the mouse.

Kimkins bowed and then said 'Are you the King of the mice, because you look very rich.'

'Yes I am,' said Mick, 'and I suppose you have come from the Humans up there,' he said in a squeaky voice. 'Horrid things,' said Mick. 'Now let's get down to business' said Mick sitting on his throne, 'first, where do you come from?'

'I come from the rug by the hearth it is lovely and warm down there,' said Kimkins.

'What is your name?'

'Kimkins Brown, have you any dead mice I can eat—'

'No I haven't and don't be so blood-thirsty,' said Mick.

'I am so hungry do you think you could give me anything to eat.'

'I could give you some cheese—'

'Hate the stuff,' said Kimkins rudely.

'I think I had better take you round the holes,' said Mick quickly. 'Now this is Mr. Mott's hole he has got a nice big family of ten little ones.'

'My um! My um!' said Kimkins to himself.

'Now this hole belongs to Mr. Mickal and his wife who has seven little ones.'

'Lovely,' said Kimkins. 'But oh! I am tired' said Kimkins. 'Good-bye Mick Mouse,' said Kimkins and woke up. 'I have had such a lovely dream,' he said. 'I did not catch one mouse what a pity, never mind.'

SHADOWS

by Elizabeth Porges, aged 15
(P.U.S. Home Schoolroom)

No sound lives in the narrow room;
No movement stirs the curtained gloom
To dim remembrance of the gold
Wan-threaded flowers the shadows hold
(For there is shadow here), and She

Sits where alone and silently
Through one high, narrow window, falls
The light in timeless madrigals
Of a constant pain (that we
Nor ever know, nor weep)—but She
Cares nothing for the loveliness
The light makes of her crimson dress
(Rose-rich once, but darkened now
With love that withered long ago).
She moves not in her slim, gold chair,
Nor combs the shadows from her hair,
Nor feels her crown of quiet gold
Press her pale brow with shadows cold,
But stares into her strange green glass—
As though she saw the silence pass
There in ordered mysteries.
Shadow-still she sits, and sees
(Ever sees, for that thin light
Knows no change of eve or night,
But still, a blind, pale singing, streams
Through the pane), a face that dreams
Might weave in sorrow. Still She stares
Into the mirror-heart, nor hears
The long-caught sob of silence. She
Cares nothing, save that She may see
That face, those proud, slow-amber eyes,
Those dark-rose lips, whose honey dies
In forgetfulness of love,
The brow, a long-sweet-soaring dove,
And the hair, that falls in gold
Beneath a quiet crown (and cold
Upon the shade-deep floor there lies
That which dully gleams). She sighs
Nor weeps, but ever in her dreams
Is that which, dull and darkened, gleams—
As gleams the crimson of her dress;
(Death comes without forgetfulness,
Only with shadows), still She stares
Into those mirrored eyes, nor cares
For all the slowly-darkened shade
A rose, too rich for death, has made . . .
She has forgotten, as She stares,
Their shadows have no part with hers.

PARIS

by Susan Collingwood, aged 12
(The Sneepe P.N.E.U. School)

WHEN I WENT to Paris I stayed in a French school. We always had a bowl of coffee, fried eggs, and some bread for breakfast. French bread is not like the English, it is made in long rolls and you buy it in measurements.

Paris started as a little fishing village, on an island in the middle of the river Seine. It grew and grew until it spread over both banks of the river, it has had three walls built round it, two were taken down because the city grew too big. Part of the third is still standing, but the two that were taken down are now two big streets.

The biggest church in Paris is very big and very beautiful. It is called Notre Dame and it has lovely stained glass windows. Behind Notre Dame there are a lot of book-stalls. The sellers sit at the other side of the road so that customers can walk all round and have a good view of the books. There is a very tall tower called the Eiffel Tower, it makes a huge, high arch across the road. I expected it to be solid brick or stone but it is like mecano with a lift and steps going up. The steps are wooden and quite open, they have been patched with tin in some places and the tower and three floors but I do not think you are allowed up to the top one. There is a little shop on the first floor.

There are lots of gardens and Parks in Paris and it is very light and pretty with wide streets and there are quite a lot of very tame pigeons. There are chairs and tables under a shade outside the bigger cafés and you can have your meals outside. Red wine is very common in Paris. Le Louvre is a very famous picture gallery,

it has lots of famous pictures in it. It is a very big building and still it has far too many pictures to hang up at the same time. We spent a day at Versailles which is very lovely and has lots of lakes and gardens in the grounds and we went to Marie Antoinette's Hamlet.

HOW THE FISH GOT ITS SCALES

by Lesley Swinnard, aged 13
(Burgess Hill P.N.E.U. School, Sussex)

LONG LONG AGO at the bottom of the sea when all the fish were very musical there lived a very fair mermaid with golden hair, which she combed with a silver comb. This mermaid was also very musical and she kept a piano in her cave. It was a very extraordinary piano made of pearl and shells and the only thing it had in common with ours was that it played scales and tunes. For her living the mermaid taught the big and little fish music in exchange for shining things. The big fish played with their fins and the little ones with their tails.

All went well for many years and the big and little fish learnt to play their scales and tunes well. Then one day when the mermaid was teaching a middle-sized fish a messenger from King Neptune came with a message for the mermaid to go at once to see him. So after telling the fish to practice scales while she was away the mermaid got into her coach which was made of mother of pearl and driven by six fish.

As soon as the mermaid was gone, the fish instead of practicing, went to the door of the cave and whistled to all the other big and little fish, who came and followed

the middle-sized fish to the piano where they all started strumming. They were still strumming an hour later when the mermaid came back. She was so angry that she worked a spell over them

Fishes big and fishes small,
On your skin for ever more,
So many scales there shall be
Just for not obeying me.

THE ROBIN FAMILY

by Stephanie Ann Conrad, aged 9
(Highlands P.N.E.U. School, Henley-on-Thames)

'Tirry-lee,' said the robin to his little wee wife,
'I think this exactly the right kind of life,
Here are our children growing big strong and fat,
And learning to beware of the horrible cat.'

'Tirry-lee,' said Ma Robin to her dearly loved mate,
'I quite agree that they're kept up-to-date.
But really they are not at all well-behaved,
And they need all the money that we've so well saved.'

'O Mama and Papa, please don't fly away,
Then we'll be as good as gold all through the day.'

This latest speech by little Bill Robin
Had almost led him to a-crying and sobbing.

'My dear, I had thought of no such thing
And really, I do not think the King
Would allow such a terrible thing at all
To happen to a birdie like you so small.'

'Tirry-lee,' said the robin to his little wife,
'I think this exactly the right kind of life,
Here are our children growing big, strong and fat,
And learning to beware of the horrible cat.'

FLOWER DAY AT "WILDERNESS"

by Kathleen B. Williams, aged 15
(Wilderness P.N.E.U. School, Medindie, South Australia)

THE LAST DAY of the second term found Leaving Honours lazily knitting, and discussing points of interest. Suddenly, Miss Wait announced that the Committee for Flower Day had asked us to display our badge in a carpet, on Victoria Square.

After a discussion, three girls were appointed to type out three hundred notices to be included with the reports! How they rushed—but by staying at School until after four o'clock, and working all day, the notices were finished.

Blue, gold and brown flowers were asked for, and on the day, although we were not expecting any, flowers came in by the dozens. Tubs were filled with the required blue and gold, as well as red, pink, white, and other beautiful flowers which we were unable to use!

A frame for the carpet was very kindly made by a brother of one of the girls, and Shylie Holden, after much trouble, drew the design on the wire. After many suggestions, it was decided to do the carpet in the Honours room, on the day before, and have it taken in before ten o'clock.

It took all day to complete the carpet. The lion was filled in with yellow jasmin (of which there was a great shortage), and although we had many prunus leaves, we decided that if possible, boronia should be used for the background. The border looked most effective, with a contrast of dark blue cinerarias.

After spending all day and enjoying ourselves immensely, someone casually enquired how we were to get the frame

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through the door. O! horror of horrors! It had not entered our minds.

The difficulty was overcome, however, by covering the flowers firmly with a sheet, so that when the frame was tipped no flower was disturbed. The next problem was, where to keep it overnight! The kindergarten room? No, the doors were not wide enough. At last we thought of the tuckshop. Here our work of art remained all night.

The next morning Mr. Davies arrived with his trailer, and the carpet was carefully laid inside. Another difficulty! The frame did not comfortably fit on the bottom; and so two girls, amid many laughs and puns from onlookers, travelled to town holding the frame in the trailer.

Then, on arriving at Victoria Square, the mad rush. With all the bumping, many of the flowers had fallen out. They were replaced by fresh ones, from many helpful people.

To add to the picture, 'Wilderness' was written below the badge, in large, beautiful, golden daffodils, sent by Mrs. Klose, whom we should like to thank very much for her generous gift.

SKI-ING

by Patricia Hall, aged 11
(Selwyn House P.N.E.U. School,
New Zealand)

IN THE WINTER I go ski-ing to Mt. Olympus; it is quite a high mountain, and in the winter it is covered with deep snow. There is a rock at the very top of the mountain which is shaped like a deer. The very first time I saw it I thought it was a real deer, but Daddy went up and touched it and it was a rock.

We went on our skis up behind the

ridge, we looked down and what we saw was beautiful. We could see hills, then smaller ones still, and we could see almost right down to the sea.

We had to wear goggles because of the glary snow.

There had been an avalanche about a week before, and we had to cross it on our skis, which was very rough going on our slippery boards. If you looked up above into the mountain you could see where it had pulled away.

Then comes the time for us to come down. We give ourselves a push and off we go; we do a stem christy. Perhaps you do not know what that is? Well you put your weight on the outside ski and lean well down the hill and around the corner you go!

A JOURNEY TO AMERICA

by Perdita Erith, aged 7
(Foxley P.N.E.U. School, Holyport,
Berks)

ONCE UPON A TIME, Daddy said, 'Oh, I am so tired of England, I want to see the world.' So he packed up all his belongings and said to Mummy and me 'Hurry up and pack — don't dawdle so!' So Mummy said 'All right'. So, you see, that's how the journey began.

First we went up to London by train, and then Tilbury. There was a customs house, and the customs man said 'What have you in your case — any gold?' And we said 'No'. Then he opened all our cases. When he found we had no gold, he let us through and we went up a gangway on to the ship. A steward took us to our cabin. There was a bed by the window, and another bed by the door. It was very hot so we went on deck.

There it was very windy, so I went to get a hot drink — it was a lovely drink of cocoa. Then I had supper and went to bed.

The next day was so windy, I only went once on to the deck. Soon we came to a rock, and the ship turned suddenly — I nearly fell over. Mummy was very excited — so was I, I do not think I was ever so excited in my life. I wondered how my pony Tawny was, and how the cat and dog were. I saw the froth on the waves.

It took us three weeks to get to Rio, which is the part we wanted. I thought it was a very long journey. Mummy said it was one more week before we were there.

At last we saw land in the distance. Next day we went ashore. Auntie and Uncle were there to meet us — AND COCKIE their little dog — a terrier. They led the way to the car, and whisked us to their home. It took about three hours.

As soon as we got there I had an ice cream — it was lovely and cool — you see, it was very hot there.

I had a nice time in America, then I went back to England on the boat.

NEW ZEALAND SHEEP FARMS

by Margot Johnstone, aged 12
(Selwyn House P.N.E.U. School,
New Zealand)

NEW ZEALAND SHEEP FARMS have got many plantations and bushes on them. The plantations contain mostly pine, gum, silver birch and poplar trees. Our fields are a good deal larger than your English ones, and they have fences of wire, or sometimes gorse hedges. We grow corn, wheat, barley, peas and grass seed but those are only some of the things which we grow on our farms. We have many thousands of acres to a big farm. In damp

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climates we graze and breed cattle, and in most dry climates we breed sheep. We breed two-tooth ewes, crossbreds, half-breds and merinoes. We are very busy in the summer time harvesting, weaning lambs, and making hay. Every Wednesday there is a big sale in Christchurch where farmers can bring their sheep, cattle and other animals to be sold. At half-past seven on Wednesday nights, the farmers who did not go to the sale like to hear if the prices for stock have gone up or down. So they turn the wireless on to our national station and listen to what happened at the sale.

THE TALE OF A HOUSE TOLD BY ITSELF

by Gary A. S. Owen, aged 11
(Anglo-American School, Kuwait)

I WON'T go into the details of how I was built. I was built like any other ordinary bungalow. I have a basement, windows, doors, chimney and all the other utensils.

I was built in France in the year 1935. Many people remarked on how nice I looked.

My first owners were a rather quarrelsome family. They were untidy, bad-mannered and irresponsible. In the end, to my disgust and anger, rather than sorrow, the man murdered his wife. The man was taken to jail and that was the last I heard of him.

Now most of my readers will guess what happened next: the war broke out. The first I heard of it was through a number of French, British and American soldiers. They were on my front lawn digging it all up. I couldn't guess for the world what was happening. But I soon found out. Before long these men started

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shooting away on their rifles. No-one was in me then, as I had been abandoned for about two months. Then I saw a man, who had a different badge from the three men in the front, crawl through me. I took him for a German. I said to myself, 'I must warn my friends outside.' So whenever the German opened a door I creaked as loud as I could. But it was no good. The man crawled to the window, steadied his rifle and — crack! crack! crack! The three men in my front lawn suddenly rolled over — dead.

The war brought a great many misfortunes to me, when it was over, I was practically in ruins.

Now comes the sad part of my story. An inspector was up here about a week ago. I knew then that my fate was sealed. Now I can see a truck-load of men with a crane. They are stopping in front of me. They are coming out of the truck.

One day has past. I can't last much longer. They're picking at my heart. Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

I MET A FISH

by Cherry Linnhe Stewart, aged 10
(Home Schoolroom)

I WAS WALKING down in a pretty meadow in the sunny afternoon. There were tall grasses waving about in the little breeze that was blowing and there was a little burn trickling over its stones singing its pretty little song as it went down to the sea, 'here I go hippity ho'. Cricketts were ticking about in the grass and there was a distant coo of a dove. Sometimes there was a pretty big shady tree looking over the stream. As I walked along the little grass path that led through the meadow I looked at the stream enjoying it very much. And as I walked along I saw

a little ring suddenly come up in a beautifully smooth pool where a great shady tree was looking over it. I was just in time to see a flash of red dart down the stream, so I followed it along for a little way and saw the red thing lying on the bottom of the stream — it was a gold fish! It was a she gold fish going out shopping. She had a little basket on her fin with a loaf of bread and some worms, she had a little sunbonnet, pale blue with a green frill edging it and a pink dress with a blue sash, she swished her tail a minute and straightened her bonnet and then looked up at me and said 'hullo! who are you?' I said 'I was Cherry' and she said, 'well, what are you doing by my stream.' I said I did not know it was her stream, she walked off rather hurriedly saying I ought to know it was *her* stream. Then I saw three little red gold fishes swimming slowly along. One had a blue dress, one had a pink dress and one had a green dress, they each had bonnets to match and each one was looking for Mrs. fish that had just talked to me. Mrs. fish said 'come along hear! why did you come out? I *told* you not to,' they said 'because we want to see who this lady was who was looking into our stream.'

Of course Mrs. Fish was rather annoyed with her children, so she hurried them along and told them to go and lie under a stone in disgrace, so whenever you see a fish under a stone, it is in disgrace!

Then a big he Gold Fish came swimming down the stream. He had on a bowler hat and dinner jacket, a white collar, spats, black shoes, and cravat. He had a moustach (which was waxed at the ends) and said 'hullo my dear, the children are not at home and must have swum out.' Mrs. Gold Fish said that they had been naughty. 'they came swimming

down all three of them, very slowly, looking for me and also looking at that naughty little girl that was looking into our stream.' Mrs. Gold Fish then said 'well I think I will let them out, we will go a swim.' So she told them to come out from under their stones and they all five went along in file, first Mr. Gold Fish, then Mrs. Gold Fish and then the three little babies. There were two girls and one boy (the boy went at the end).

So they went and swam down the stream with their eyes popping out with excitement, trying to look at me rather pretending that they weren't at all pleased that I had come and looked into their stream.

A VILLAGE SCENE

by Margaret Schofield-Palmer,
aged 13
(Fairfield P.N.E.U. School,
Ambleside)

THERE WERE NOT many people about and they were only a few farm labourers; as soon as they were out of hearing the calm remained unbroken. This sense of peace and quiet was, however, not for long; windows were opened and curtains drawn back and the day's work began. The children prepared for school and away they went laughing and chattering. Through the busy sound of the beating of mats and scrubbing of doorsteps came the noise of hooves and along the street came two carthorses tossing their heads with gay abandon and snatching here and there at somebody's hedge; a few minutes later came a herd of cows and after that a hay cart.

Dinner-time came, the children came home from school and the smell of various

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dinners pervaded the village. That afternoon was the scene of great activity, for was not Farmer Brown's Elizabeth Jane to be crowned Queen of the May? Soon the flashes of brightly-coloured summer dresses and shady hats filled the village. As soon as the last gig had rumbled away, the village resumed its old peaceful serenity, the bees hummed busily; a few hens clucked lazily and cats sunned themselves on garden walls and cottage doorsteps.

The sun was beginning to set and one by one the villagers came home, old men hung round the well discussing the May-pole and neighbours gossiped over garden-gates, but, on thinking of the morrow's work went slowly home. Bit by bit the moon rose and as the cottage lights were slowly extinguished the village was bathed in silver. The old dog at the farm was turned to silver, the leaves of the trees were turned to silver, the fish in the stream lay like bars of silver while a stream of liquid silver flowed over them and a tiny mouse scampered by like a silver spectre. There was not a sound except for the occasional bark of a dog and all the other country sounds. It seemed as if the village and all that was in it was bewitched by some ethereal spirit.

THE REINDEER

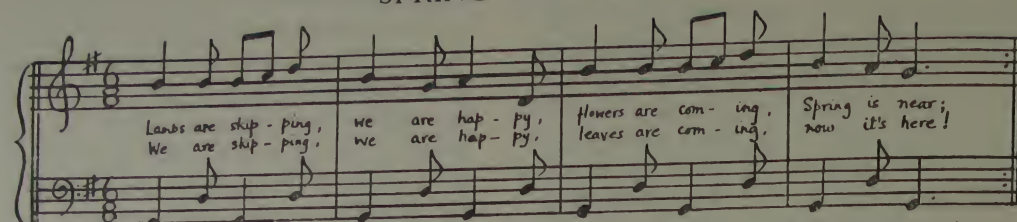
by Clive Vincent Collier, aged 10
(Churcham Primary P.N.E.U.
School)

Far in the cold and silent North
In the land of the Mid-night sun,
With dainty hoof, so sure of foot
The graceful reindeer run.

The ground is white, the sky is blue,
And silence fills the air.
But the land which grows the reindeer moss,
To the reindeer is most fair.

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SPRING IS NEAR



Words and Music by Elizabeth Barber, aged 5 (Home Schoolroom)

A CHILD'S GRACE

by Ann Thornley, aged 14
(Burgess Hill P.N.E.U. School,
Sussex)

'Come my children and do repeat
To our Lord your grace before meat.
The table set, the food's prepared
Gather round for all shall be shared.

'We thank you Lord for the sun to shine
Thank you Lord for our leisure time
Thank you God for the food we eat . . .
Now my children your grace repeat.'

Now Mary stands:

'I thank you God
For helping hands
That show the way
And problems solve
Every day.'

John says his grace:

'I thank you Lord
For games I play
Songs I will sing
For fun I have
For everything.'

'Well said my dears well spoken all,
To your prayers 'Amen' I'll say;
May God keep you and bless us to-day'
'Amen' quoth they.
The meal commence.

UMBRELLAS

by J. Elliott, aged 11
(Flexlands P.N.E.U. School,
Chobham)

There are many kinds of umbrellas,
Red and white and blue,
You must never keep them in cellars—
You'll offend them if you do!

Umbrellas are very short tempered,
(Blue and green and pink)
Umbrellas are horribly snappy—
Not like parasols, I think!

Umbrellas are prouder than tigers,
(Pink and mauve and brown)—
Whatever the weather may be like,
You must always take them to town.

Umbrellas are frightfully useful
(Brown and gray and gold)—
You must always have one,
However ugly and old.

Umbrellas are horribly swanky
(Gold and crimson and black)—
So if one is ever cheeky
You must give it a jolly hard whack!

An umbrella's an absolute must-have—
It is proud and handsome and tall.
So please to treat it kindly
As it sits in its stand in the hall.

THE RAKE AND THE WHEELBARROW

by Mary-Rose Stephenson, aged 14
(Home Schoolroom)

SCENE ONE: *A garden on a hot, sultry day. The garden tools are about to hold a meeting to decide what they are to do about the carelessness and roughness of their young master, who is always breaking them and leaving them out in the rain. RAKE, TROWEL, SPADE and FORK are on their way to the appointed meeting-place, the tool-shed.*

Enter RAKE, TROWEL, SPADE and FORK, talking.

RAKE: Something must be done about this ill-treatment of us tools. Look at me, I'm rusted up although I'm only two years old. It's really disgraceful!

FORK & TROWEL (together): And look at us we've both had to have new handles, and they will be broken, too, if this roughness doesn't stop.

SPADE (creaking): What about me? I've been thrown down, kicked aside, left out and I don't know what else besides. If master isn't taught a lesson soon, I'll be thrown away as useless before I'm even middle-aged!

RAKE: Well here we are at the shed and there are Wheelbarrow and Lawn Mower and Shears waiting for us; so we must hurry up. At the meeting we will arrange something to stop this nonsense!

SCENE TWO: *Inside the tool shed. The first thing to do was to elect a president. It is a draw between RAKE and WHEELBARROW, so they decide to run the meeting between them. But as they are both rather quick-tempered it is soon a very noisy meeting!*

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RAKE: Ahem. Now, Tools as you know, we are gathered here to decide on some punishment for this careless, thoughtless and . . .

WHEELBARROW (interrupting): thoroughly wicked young scamp and raggamuffin! Let us rise in—

RAKE: Be quiet I am starting this meeting.

WHEELBARROW: Well! I like that! I've just as much right as you to speak,—I'm as much the president as you! However, you may proceed. (With a haughty look.)

RAKE (casting a furious glance at TROWEL who had begun to laugh): And, now, what I was going to suggest, was that each of you should tell us what your special complaint is, then after—er—consulting Wheelbarrow I will tell you what we think could be done.

ALL: Hear, hear.

TROWEL: My complaint is that master has broken my handle twice in three weeks.

FORK: Mine is that he has left me in the rain for a whole week and then, only yesterday, he broke one of my prongs.

LAWN MOWER: He ran me up and down the paths instead of on the grass and wore all my blades down.

SHEARS: And he tried to cut wire with me. Oh, my. I'm still sore from it!

SPADE: He has thrown me down five times in one day, and he flung me into the shed and broke my handle only a week ago.

RAKE: Well now, you have all expressed your complaints, except Wheelbarrow and me. What did you say yours was Wheelbarrow?

WHEELBARROW (groaning): Oh me, oh my, I think mine's the worst, for instead of filling me with nice dry leaves or other garden rubbish, master turns me upside-down and dances on me! Any

one would think I was an indian drum or something, and last time master danced on me one of my bottom boards went through!

RAKE: Well, we have all expressed our complaints—mine being that this young rascal has broken three of my prongs off—so now we will proceed with the decision.

WHEELBARROW: What about getting together in an army and marching to the house, then threatening the master, that we will charge at him and chase him all round the garden if he does not behave?

ALL (including RAKE): Hear, hear.

RAKE: Very well, let's get started. Get into marching order everyone,—now, now, stop pushing please!

WHEELBARROW: Right. About turn. Quick, march!

And so the TOOLS all march towards the house. When they arrive at the door, the RAKE knocks and the BOY, their master, comes running to the door from his play-room to see what all the clashing and clanging is about. When he opens it and sees all the ferocious looking tools confronting him, he flies back to his play-room and tries to hide in the toy cupboard but the tools are hot on his heels and see him disappearing into it.

SPADE: There he is! Just inside that cupboard! After him!

TROWEL (pulling the BOY out): Come out of it, you naughty fellow! We'll teach you to treat us like you have been doing!

BOY (tearfully): Oh please, please let m-me g-go.

RAKE: Not until you promise not to break our handles and leave us in the rain and kick us about. Unless you promise to treat us properly we will charge at you—prongs fore-most!

WHEELBARROW: And don't you dare dance on me any more or I'll roll over your toes twenty times a minute!

BOY (wailing): Boo-hoo, oh p-p-please d-don't do that. I p-promise I-I won't d-dance on you or l-leave you out or any-anything. I promise I won't.

RAKE: Right, we won't do anything to you this time but if you forget this promise of yours—well look-out! Good afternoon, master. Come on tools, back to the shed.

BOY: Good-bye Mr. Rake I'm sorry I broke your prongs. Good-bye.

TOOLS: Good-bye, good-bye, master.

EXEUNT

And so the tools went back to the tools shed, perfectly contented and happy.

ZACCHAEUS

by Katharine Chapman, aged 10
(Ashbourne P.N.E.U. School, Derby)

Through the town of Jericho
Jesus passed by
Lots of people crowded there
When he was nigh.

Then a man named Zacchaeus
Very rich in gold
Tried to press him through the crowd
Jesus to behold.

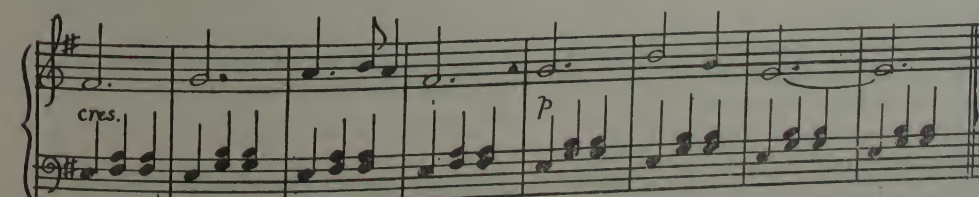
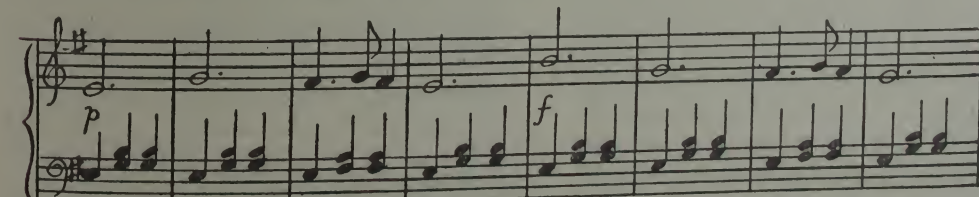
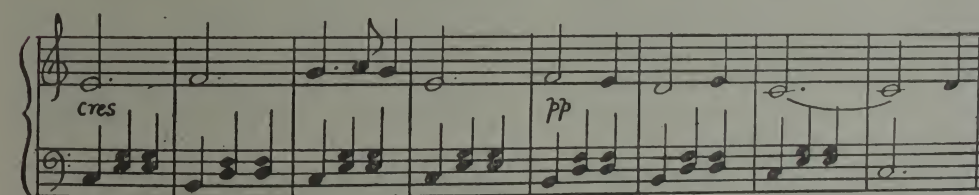
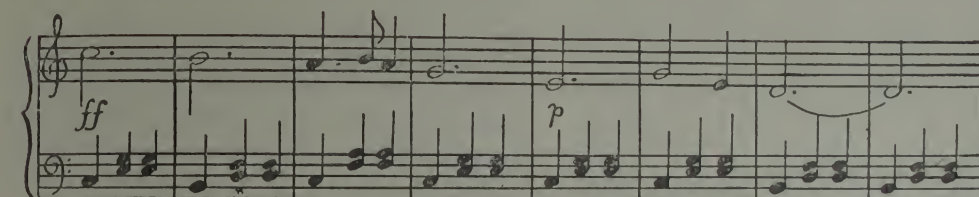
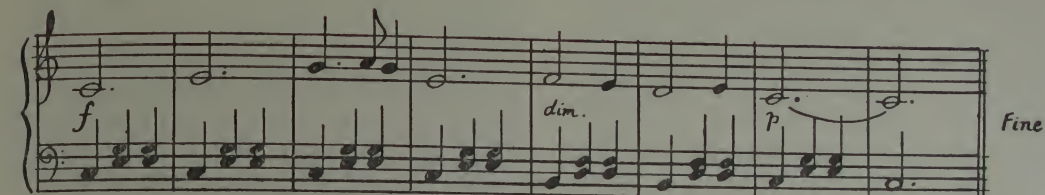
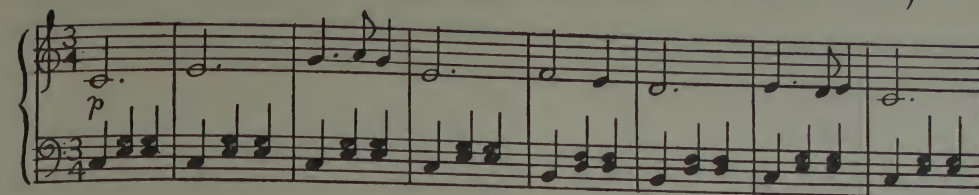
But finding that he couldn't
He climbed up a tree
And hidden in its branches
Jesus he did see.

Jesus went beneath the tree
Then looked up and said,
'Come down Zacchaeus to the ground
From above my head.

And go quickly to your house
For there I would abide
And while I am stopping here
With you will reside.'

WALTZ

by Anne Hughes, aged 11 (Burgess Hill P.N.E.U. School)



D.C.

THE GATE-WAY TO PAULINE'S PALACE

by Arlette Bernard, aged 12
(Home Schoolroom, Haiti, West Indies)

YOU ALL KNOW about North and South America. Well! in between the two, are lots of islands known as the West Indies. When Columbus discovered the New World, he first discovered the West Indies. The third island he discovered, was Haiti. Haiti is the second biggest island in the West Indies.

Little by little the Spaniards killed all the Red Indians in Haiti. Then Haiti was deserted by the Spanish. So the French came and took Haiti for themselves. Then they got some natives from Africa, to work for them as slaves.

That went on for three hundred years. Then, at the same time as the French Revolution, the slaves revolted and chased the French away. Soon under the leadership of a few able former slaves: Toussaint l'Ouverture, Henri Christophe and Dessalines, they formed a nation.

Then in Europe appeared Napoleon !!! Soon Napoleon decided to recapture Haiti for the French. So he sent one of his generals, called Leclerc, with an army to Haiti. Now Leclerc had married one of Napoleon's sisters, called Pauline. Pauline came along with Leclerc, and they were so sure of capturing Haiti in no time, that Pauline had a palace built for herself near Cap Haitien.

Well! if you were to go to Haiti, you would find, in the North of Haiti, a town called Cap Haitien. Then, if you drive from South to North of Cap Haitien, at the North, just out of town, you would find Pauline's Palace. At least, the ruins

of it, all overgrown with grass and weeds. When the Haitiens wanted to make that road, they cut through the ruined walls of the old palace. As you are going through, on the right, you see the gate-way.

You cannot get on the other side of the gate-way, firstly, because there are bushes and thorns, and secondly, because just behind those bushes, the land slopes steeply down to the sea.

Before, this gate-way was looking on to another road, but the sea encroached so much upon the land, that the road is now in the sea. In some years time, probably this gate-way will follow into the sea.

* * * *

Leclerc, later died of yellow fever. Then, after many battles, at last HAITI was victorious. Then Henri Christophe was made King, after the others had died.

OUR PIGS

by Terry Smith, aged 8
(Maisemore Church of England P.N.E.U. School)

My father has a little pig,
He also has a sow,
The sow had seven baby pigs
But they're gone to market now.

It's very hard to get the food
To feed the pigs these days,
We have to boil up roots and things
And find out other ways.

I love to watch the piggies eat
They get in such a mess,
With food all over head and ears
And in their eyes I guess.

And when they've finished up their food
Of roots both cooked and raw,
They gently get back to their bed
To lie down in the straw.

PEOPLE WE MEET ON THE ROAD

by Megan Tidbury, aged 10
(Home Schoolroom)

THE DAY BEGINS early in Zanzibar and at sunrise a bugle sounds reveille and the cry of the holy men from the top of the mosques call all Moslems to prayer, so let us set off on the road at once and see who we can meet.

Clink. Clink. Here comes the coffee seller ready with the morning coffee. He wears a piece of long coloured, and often checked, cloth wound round him like a long skirt and outside this hangs a shirt on top of which he wears a sleeveless khaki jacket. He carries a little charcoal brazier and on top of it he stands a large shining brass coffee pot full of morning hot coffee. He has also a little tin of water. His coffee cups are like little rimless basins and to attract attention he clinks two or three together in his hand. You can have two cups of hot black sugarless coffee for a penny. It is very nice but I prefer it with milk.

As we move on towards the centre of the town we shall pass some poor people who have no homes and who sleep on doorsteps or seats. There is one old man who always sleeps near the Customs Office. He has long dirty brown tangled hair and he wears a filthy old robe full of holes. He could find work if he wished but he has always lived as a beggar and would have no other life.

When we reach the market-place we shall find the ox-carts beginning to arrive from the country districts bringing in the fruit and vegetables and firewood to market.

The drivers, who are mainly Africans, are half asleep but the old oxen walk

slowly on. They are very sensible animals and avoid other traffic without being guided very much.

There are also a few donkey carts which are often driven by small boys who usually wear a pair of shorts and a vest. The Arab donkeys are bigger than the ones you see on the beach in England but they cannot pull such heavy loads as the oxen.

While we are waiting for more people to wake up we will walk a little further down the road towards the sea for here we shall meet some Arab sailors going down to the harbour. They own big sailing boats called dhows which trade with the mainland. They usually wear long-sleeved reddish brown robes. They are wonderful sailors. We shall see some fishermen too getting their canoes ready. They wear a piece of cloth like the coffee seller but nothing on top. On their heads they wear a wide brimmed straw hat. And now here is a much wilder looking person. He is paler skinned and wears a long robe like the dhow sailors but round his waist is a leather belt with a dagger at the side and round his head is wrapped a most beautiful coloured embroidered Khasmir turban. His hair is long and untidy and his eyes are quite wild. He is also a dhow sailor but he owns a big dhow and has come all the way from Arabia bringing us dates and carpets. Some of them have never been to a civilised country before and are very frightened when they see cars.

We will go back to the market where the streets will be much busier now. Africans, Arabs and Indians come to market to do their shopping and Europeans are on their way to work.

The Swahili wear long-sleeved white robes called Kanzus which are often very ragged and on their heads they wear pill-

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box caps. The Arabs wear the same but round their waists they wear silver and leather belts with silver daggers and if they are going to visit their friends they will wear a long coloured coat embroidered with gold cords and tassels and a white turban will be wrapped around the white pill-box hats. Some of the modern Arabs wear red hats like short chimney pots with a long black tassel on top.

The Indian dress varies. Some men wear ordinary white suits. Others wear long white trousers with a three-quarter length jacket while the Hindus wear white material wrapped round their waists and between their legs and a white shirt worn outside. On their heads they wear a white drill Gandhi-cap.

You see more men than women around the streets. When an African woman comes to town she must wear a long piece of black material around her head and shoulders with a piece of it thrown forward across her face for she is in purdah and must not be seen by any man except her husband.

If we walk away from the town towards the country districts we shall meet some women out of purdah and they will be working around their huts or in the fields and will be wearing brightly designed pieces of material wrapped underneath their arms and matching pieces over their heads. The African children wear very little.

And now it is getting very hot so we will go back home until after tea.

About four o'clock we will stroll out again and find the streets very crowded especially with Indian women and children taking their afternoon walk. Their beautiful silk saris attract our attention at once but we must not stop and watch

them because I want to go down near the Palace for every afternoon at about the same time His Highness the Sultan and Her Highness the Sultana take their afternoon drive. We are just in time. His car is bright red and has no number plate so we cannot mistake it.

He is dressed like the other rich Arabs and the Sultana wears an ordinary frock and a black cloak but she does not keep purdah. We will stand still and bow when the Royal Car passes. Did you see that friendly wave and smile he gave us? I hope you have enjoyed seeing the people we meet on the road.

THE SEASONS

by Margaret Lee, aged 15
(Ashbourne P.N.E.U. School, Derby)

Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter;
Which of them is best?
The daffodils, or sunny days,
Or twirling leaves which never rest?

Spring; when lambs are in the fields,
And snowdrops bow their heads;
And animals from Winter sleep
Get up, and leave their beds.

Summer; when the days are warm,
With rivers, crystal clear,
And tiny flowers among the hedge
But Autumn draws quite near.

Autumn, when the winds are rough,
And snow begins to fall.
The leaves are golden-brown, and red.
Then comes Winter's call.

The herald then, is snow of course,
It roars through leafless trees.
The hedgerows are so bare and dull
And shiver in the breeze.

MY LIFE (BY A RUINED CASTLE)

by Dorothy Dalley, aged 12
(Home Schoolroom)

I WAS BUILT in Cornwall, and there, for the first time, set mine eyes upon life. Cruel, dejected and dull to some people, but the wicked black rocks, the roaring sea, the foam and spray; and the wind, which howled eerily down my corridors, was a joy and a happiness for a Cornishman, which I claimed to be, being built of Cornish stone.

I lived in the time when the wild Cornish were excelling themselves. One dark and raging night, three men crept from my door, making for a high cliff to mine right.

Then they lighted them a lantern, and waved it to and fro, it showing a tremendous bright light against the inky darkness of the night.

There was a mighty storm raging over water as well as land, the sea thundered over the rocks, the lightning stabbed a purple sky and rain lashed over all.

Suddenly, there was a rending crash, heard faintly over the storm, and the men came back, well satisfied with their evil work. They had tempted a ship going from Bristol to Plymouth to its death; the blinding light making the sailors suppose a lighthouse was near, and when the ship crashed, splintering over the tooth-like rocks, they left the sailors to their doom.

But — but these happenings were in the days of my youth; now, I am a ruined old castle.

With the ivy crawling over the crumbled masonry, no one could guess how proud and majestic I was when a young thing. Still, there is an air of mystic adventure in my walls that helps me to remember the bygone days of my

youth, and casting back in my mind's eye, I again see those furtive Cornishmen creep from my doors and with no more noise than a shadow, go up to the cliff and signal . . .

The crashing of thunder, the boom of the sea,
The wind in my turrets, blew eerily,
While the wreckers of Cornwall, so wild and so free,
Crept stealthily forth, on their black devilry.

SOME PAGES FROM NOAH'S DIARY

by Angela Garrard, aged 13
(Fairfield, Ambleside)

SECOND MONTH

First Day. Today we are celebrating my birthday. I am five hundred and one today. Mrs. Noah has obviously been training the monkeys to say, 'Happy Birthday to you,' because they screeched it into my ear this morning and woke me up. The sparrows have been having midnight feasts lately and our corn supply has been vanishing overnight, so I have made a cage for them. They hate it!

Second Day. Ham has just announced that he has a flea circus to show us. We are having an entertainment next week. Last night there was a leak in the roof; Mrs. Noah and I were up until nine o'clock with buckets and mops, the water fowl were in their element. I have to mend the leak today.

Third Day. We have a new arrangement for the ducks, they have gone on strike about laying unless we let them swim on the flood, so we tie a string to their necks and the other end to the stern of the ark.

Fourth Day. The sheep and cows say they are tired of hay and want some fresh

grass; the camels say that they ought to have humps. The giraffe's neck gets longer every day. I shall have to make an extension in the roof for him soon.

Fifth Day. Shem is getting very good at diving now. He wants to dive off the roof but I don't think it would be safe because we do not know how deep the flood is. The lioness is due to cub in a week's time (I hope it is not quads!). She says she wants a son and heir but I hope it is a girl. (Much easier to domesticate.)

Sixth Day. Japheth can make tea now, which is a great help, but he keeps forgetting to warm the pot. The hens are moulting now and it is a terrible mess to clean up. Mrs. Noah is trying to make them pick up their feathers after they have dropped them and throw them out of a porthole.

Seventh Day. This morning Ham's wife found the chimpanzees in Mrs. Noah's wardrobe, they had all her bonnets strewn about and were trying them on. One young one had taken possession of my wife's best bonnet and would not be parted from it. We are going to take it from her tonight when she is soundly asleep.

Eighth Day. Today we sighted a mountain top, Shem kept asking me to let me land on it but I thought that it might be dangerous and so said 'No!' The frog slipped away unnoticed and landed on the peak, when he found he was stranded he began to jump around all over the little piece of land that there was, finally we had to throw a lifebelt out to him which he hung on to for all he was worth. His wife got into a panic and had to be comforted by Japheth's wife.

Ninth Day. The black beetle was missing today which caused great confusion,

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all the animals coats were gone through with a tooth comb and all the deck boards were taken up and all the stores gone through. After a days searching he was found sitting on the lifebelt (the one place we had not looked in!) feeling very pleased with himself, he was given a severe lecture by myself and sent to bed early!

A CONVERSATION

by Marcia Warr, aged 12
(P.N.E.U. School, Bournemouth)

Characters:

BRITISH SAILOR in the time of NELSON.

BRITISH SOLDIER in the time of the
CRIMEAN WAR.

BRITISH SOLDIER in the KOREAN WAR.

KOREAN SOLDIER (*talking to himself*):
Brrr, I'm frozen waiting for Chinese Communists to climb to the top of this hill, the Colonel said that we must come up here because he has heard that more and more Chinese are sweeping into the district. Oh, my feet, oh my hands! I do wish, I do wish I was at home by the fire in England.

(*Enter a ghost of a SAILOR IN THE TIME OF NELSON. The ghost is sobbing*).

SAILOR: Wh-e-re ever is Nelson?

KOREAN SOLDIER: Oh my goodness, you did give me a fright!

SAILOR (*still sobbing*): Oh dear, where, oh where is Nelson? I'm sure that Napoleon will be here soon, so we must get to our boats or Napoleon will be upon us.

KOREAN SOLDIER: Look here, Nelson and Napoleon have been dead over a hundred years. I learnt that when I was a boy from my history book, as well as about another person, Florence Nightingale, in the Crimean War.

(*Then comes ANOTHER SOLDIER, with a faint limp.*)

CRIMEAN SOLDIER: I'm sorry if I interrupted, but I could not help hearing you say something about Florence Nightingale.

KOREAN SOLDIER: Oh, that's all right, but you look as if you were in the Crimean War with that costume on.

CRIMEAN SOLDIER: I was, and Florence was marvellous; she saved my life and many others. At night she would come round to see if we were all right with a candle, so therefore we called her Lady of the Lamp.

(*Then a bullet comes whistling past.*)

CRIMEAN SOLDIER } My, whatever was that?
SAILOR } Was it a kind of bird?

KOREAN SOLDIER: No—a bullet; but it took me off my guard. I must stop talking now, and concentrate on my shooting.

CRIMEAN SOLDIER } (*together*): We both
SAILOR } wish you luck.

KOREAN SOLDIER: Well, goodbye: you see I am carrying on your work in the world.

A JOURNEY TO FRANCE

by Hilary Thomas, aged 8
(Foxley P.N.E.U. School, Holyport, Berks)

ONE SUMMER I went to France for my holiday with my Mummy and Daddy, and my brother and sister. We packed our cases—I packed my little one on my own. When we were ready we packed the cases in the car and we got in and had a very long journey to Dover. We went to the customs house and then we got in to the boat that was to take us to France. The car was 'craned' into the boat, and we left England.

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A horn blew to warn the other boats we were coming. David, my big brother, went and looked over the edge of the boat. He said it looked as if he was going to fall in.

At last we got to France. We drove a little way, and the car went wrong and we had to go back to Calais. We went to a hotel to stay the night, while the A.A. mended the car.

In the morning Daddy went to fetch the car and we went on. We were going to the seaside fast. When we got there, we went into our rooms. Elizabeth and I could go on to the sand on our own, because it was just down the lane. On the sand there were boards for the boats to go on. Under one of the boards someone had dug a tunnel. David and I crawled under it.

The ten days we had went quickly. The next place we were going to was Blois. In Blois we were going to see some friends of my mother's. When we got there, the six children were in bed, because it was 12 o'clock. In the morning we went to see the children. There were five boys and one girl. The biggest boy was called Patrick—the next biggest were twins called Evrys and Bellnair. The next was called Pierre, and the youngest boy was John. The girl was Carranek.

We stayed ten days with them and then we went to Paris to stay with some more friends of my mother's. They were all grown up. One of the girls lent Elizabeth and me her old dolls and one of the boys lent David his meccano—he made a windmill for Elizabeth.

We saw a place where lights were all dotted about—but really it was all the roads massed together. One day we went past them on the way from a castle, but they were not on. As it was the last day

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we had in France, when it was time for the lights to go on, we went back to see them. In the morning we started home.

On the way home we stayed at a hotel for the night — the next day we drove to Calais, and picked apples on the way, from a tree. At Calais we got on a boat and went to England.

In Dover we had supper and then went home. It was 12 o'clock when we got home, so we went to bed.

HOW THE PENGUIN GOT HIS DINNER-JACKET

by Cyril Porter Burrows, aged 14
(Home Schoolroom)

LONG, LONG AGO, when the earth was still very hot, there lived in the north, in fact on the north pole, two little penguins. Their names were Penny and Peak; these two birds, if such I can call them, because penguins in those days were pure white, dwelt on an ice-berg and there was only one.

This ice-berg was small enough, but everytime the sun came out it slowly became smaller, until there was only two square feet left. 'O dear! what can I do?' cried Peak, and bent his head in sorrow. Then suddenly the air became colder, and the sad eyes of Peak opened, and there before him was Thrym the king of the frost giants. His fingers were icycles and a constant whirl of snow was his cloak. In a high pitched chilly voice Thrym demanded, 'My friend Peak what do you most desire in all the world?' Peak replied with no hesitation, 'Your majesty if I could live in a land of snow and ice, with Penny I would be very happy.'

So Penny and Peak found themselves in Thrym's great forest of ice and snow.

Now it happened that the great King wanted a waiter, but being a difficult man, he could not obtain one, so Penny and Peak offered to help. Through the long summer months Penny and Peak were continually running in and out of the great hall, carrying frozen bear and iced sheep, because the king would melt if he ate anything hot.

Though they had all their matters straightened out, there was still something missing which they could not understand. They became distressed and unhappy and this was soon noticed by Thrym, who asked if he could do anything to help. 'Please your majesty,' cried Peak, 'I am so tired with trying to keep myself clean, why only the other day during the great feast, for the end of Summer, I spilled some soup all down my front and as you can see, I have not got it off yet.' 'My flippers too are very soar' interrupted Penny, with scrubbing, and one thing I don't like, is going around with greasy flippers.' 'Well!' said Thrym, 'This is a matter which my tailor must take in hand.'

So Penny and Peak became the centre of excitement as no one knew what the tailor was going to make. When everyone was called into the great hall, sometime later, they knew what was going to happen when the tailor arose from his seat, with two parcels under each arm.

A hush fell upon the assembly when the tailor bowed and handed the bundles to the king. Thrym stood up, and a stately voice from one of the pages annouised that, 'His majesty the king will now speak.' 'My most loyal subjects,' said Thrym, 'I am most pleased to give to Peak and Penny a new clean dinner-jacket.' As he finished Peak stepped forward, bowed, and mid cheers accepted the two jackets; then hurrying back to

Penny they quickly put them on, and Peak stepped forward once more. 'Your majesty, Penny and I are pleased to accepted these presents, and do most humbly thank your majesty, and this shall be a token through the ages, that all penguins will wear a dinner-jacket in token for your majesty's kindness.'

THE WAY OF FRIENDS

by Gwen James, aged 15

We dreamt impossible things,
But for us they were possible;
We took inconceivable wings
And hastened past time,
To where the unknowable's known,
The intangible, touchable;
To where the whole universe lies
In a nursery rhyme.

With improbable feet we walked
Improbable sunlight;
With extraordinary hands we held
What our fancies had made.
We changed the whole world for a whim,
And remade it one night.
We talked with the angels and learnt
The bright games they played.

The highest achievements in life
Were ours for the asking,
The invisible things of the world
Shone bright in our eyes.
We knew not the bounds of the years
And Time, unmasking,
Revealed himself simple and kindly,
We were not surprised.

For had we not seen all nonsense
Made perfectly sensible?
And had we not fashioned a world
Which was quite our own?
And had we not found that all things
Which are incomprehensible
Are the joys that God keeps for his children
Until they are grown.

A VOYAGE FROM BOMBAY TO LIVERPOOL

by Patrick Henderson, aged 12
(Home Schoolroom)

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THERE WAS GREAT excitement on the tenth of September 1949 as we were going to England for our first time as I was born in Lahore and my sister in Madras. We cast off from Ballard Pier at about noon and once we got out it was very rough.

Karachi was our first port of halt. We were very glad when we arrived here because here we got on more cargo where as before we had nothing but water and rocked very badly. We went ashore at Karachi and to the town to see a few places in a taxi. When we left we sat on deck to watch the lights getting fainter and fainter.

We next reached Aden where we went round in a taxi to see some tanks that Nebuchadnezzar built to store water in as water here is very scarce. To get to the shore we had to get into motor-boats from the 'Cilicia' (that was our ship). When we looked at our ship as we came back from the tanks in the evening she was all lit up and looked like a fairy ship. So we left Aden after a lovely evening.

One morning I was taken down to the engine room and what a noise it was! But what I liked best was when I was taken on to the bridge but I am afraid I should never be able to make anything of all those charts!

After Aden we got to Port Said where all the hawkers came along side. There like Aden we could not go right in but there was a bridge affair across which we walked. Here we went to see Simon Arts, a well known shop, and then went to see de Lesseps statue which stands at the end of the Mole facing down the canal which he built.

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While going through the Suez Canal we were held up by a long convoy of ships and we kept saying that each one would be the last but still they came and we had to tie up for over five hours. But here before I go any further I must say something about the Magic Man, whom every one who has travelled from West to East or vice versa must know very well. A most popular man and a great favourite of the children. He would come on board with a cry of 'Gully gully gully gully no half crown no chicken' for one of his famous tricks was producing chickens from every where men's pockets, children's ears and from the most odd places. We loved him and followed him from deck to deck, we could have followed him for ever, I think, he was so clever. There are many of them of course, they are Egyptians by Nationality but they are great.

To say something about the Mediterranean — In my opinion I found it to be most picturesque and sunny and calm and all who felt sea-sick must have been cured while we cruised through this part of our journey.

Then when nearing home — the days were less sunny and calm. The ship's foghorn sounded very frequently for by this time we were always enveloped in fog. We passed Cape St. Vincent and then we knew we were nearing journeys end.

Liverpool looked crowded with only thick smoking chimney stacks to be seen — but what cared I for all this greyneess when London with all the wonderful things to see there was coming nearer.

Coming up the Mersey I saw an interesting but sad thing. It was the mast and funnel of a sunken ship, a victim of the last war — sunk so close to the shores of home.

The 'Cilicia' docked at seven in the evening but we were only allowed to disembark early next morning.

So started the first day of our holiday in England. We — my little sister, my nannie, and I loved every minute of it and think that there will never be anything like our first trip home.

ON READING ALOUD

by Susan May, aged 15
(Knockrabo P.N.E.U. School, Eire)

IT WAS A COLD winter's evening and the snow was falling all round the house, which, as it was situated on a moor was shielded from the wind and snow by only a few poplars. The house not being centrally heated, was so cold that as you went away from the fire with glowing cheeks and fire-burnt legs, and made your way towards the wing in which the bedrooms were stationed, you felt so cold that any stranger in the house would have thought that you were undergoing a great amount of pain. In reality, however, it was that you were so cold that you doubled yourself over to try to keep moderately off freezing point.

The night which I am now going to talk about, was however, a great deal colder than any other night I had hitherto witnessed. As was the custom in winter, we all were read to by my mother — 'The Pickwick Papers', I believe the book was — and we all found much pleasure in the presence of Mr. Pickwick whom we found extremely amusing. My sister, as usual, had her embroidery at hand, and every now and then when she was not too engrossed in the jokes of Mr. Pickwick she would pick up her embroidery, sew about two stitches, and then would once more be compelled to put it down and laugh

heartily. My younger brother did not seem to be so absorbed in 'The Pickwick Papers' as in his Meccano set, and would suddenly come out with such remarks as, 'Oh! *how* do you put this together? This wheel it outsized'. These remarks were followed by angry 'Shush!'-es, and there would once more be silence.

Those evenings were very pleasantly spent, and not until after I had left home and gone to school did I realize that my mother read so well. At school no one seemed able to put expression into the voices of different people, as my mother did between the voices of Mr. Pickwick and his many companions. We read essays, history and geography, and the voices of my school-mates seemed to me to be very monotonous and uninteresting. But you must not imagine that everyone read this way. We went into a room in the evenings where we were read to, and I found out that a great many people could read very well indeed. I enjoyed those evenings very much and was sorry when the bell went for us to go to bed.

The way different people read was most amusing. Some of them read so fast that you heard very few words at all; others read so slowly that you could read to the bottom of the page and when you had come to the end, you would still find them about five lines from the top. But some people read so loudly that you could whisper quite continuously, without being heard by anyone but your next-door neighbour. There was one girl who read so softly that unless you followed her in the book you could not hear a word she was saying, but just a soft murmur in the distance.

We used to have a reading exam at the end of every term which took place in a large room. We brought chairs with us,

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and a poetry book, and then, one by one, we went up to the top of the room, and feeling very nervous would shakily read a verse of 'unseen' poetry. We found this rather a petrifying experience, and we were continually told that we read poetry as if we were reading the newspaper!

But what could be more enjoyable than sitting by a fire on a winter's evening and listening to someone, who can really read well, reading a book to you. If you have knitting to do and there is a nice fire in the grate; the curtains are pulled and the armchairs are drawn up to the fire, it gives one a very cosy and contented feeling. When there is no one in the house except yourself it is nice to turn on the wireless and listen to a story acted or told by the B.B.C.

When children are very young and go to bed early, one of the most popular ways of bribing them to go to bed is by telling them that you will come upstairs and read a story to them. This way never fails to be popular, so popular in fact that it is sometimes very hard to get away, because the more they hear the more they want to go on hearing. It is only natural however that a child should want to hear a story about fairies and wicked witches, and the older they get the more they want to read. A child who has no playmates loves being read to.

But to get full satisfaction out of being read aloud to, I think it is necessary to have the right atmosphere in the room, to have a nice book to listen to, and a person who can read well. With a person who does not read well and who puts no expression into her voice, I think that reading is no fun at all and that you might as well read the book to yourself, for even though your voice may sound terrible to other people, it usually seems all right to you.

THE MAGPIE

by Ben Houfton, aged 8
(P.N.E.U. School, Nottingham)

I HAVE GOT a boat called the Magpie, and it is a very big boat. It is four thousand feet long and the mast is four thousand feet high. It has been further than any boat in the world. It has been across the Pacific Ocean and can carry six million people. It has been over a wave four thousand feet high, and it didn't rock at all. It draws five thousand feet and it has got jets in case it breaks down, otherwise it has got engines. It has got six engines, three on each side, and it has got four engines for spare. It has got a cinema, a swimming pool a hundred feet deep. You can have warm water or cold water by pushing a button. It has got some guns and it has got four flags—the American, the English, the Scottish and the Swiss. It has got four thousand lights and they all work by one switch. It has got a hooter as loud as four times thunder rumbling.

THE SPLENSERS

by Robin Bryer, aged 6
(Home Schoolroom)

(The Splensers are two small homemade woollen gollywogs who live an active life in Robin's nursery. Occasionally they go further afield for adventure. Their story was taken down verbatim, as dictated by Robin to his mother.)

I. THE SPLENSERS GO TO SOUTH AFRICA

ONE DAY Mrs. Splenser bought a sewing-machine and she said to her husband, 'Mr. Splenser, my lovable husband, I

hear that the South Africans want their clothes mended, so we will go to South Africa with all six Poddies (their children) and the sewing-machine.'

So off they went on a boat to Cape Town.

As soon as they got there they gave a Concert. The Poddies played the piano and sang, and the sewing-machine was put on the platform so everybody could see it. After the Concert all the South Africans sent in their clothes to be mended.

Then the Splensers and their children went back home in their boat.

When they got back they bought a farm called Splenser's Ground and adopted another child, a dear little boy called Lister. They bought a fleet of cows called the Rosie-Posies and a bull called Sir Hugh Compass, and a little kitten called Merry-paws.

Whenever the Splensers give a party they always have a Concert too.

II. THE SPLENSERS AT HOME

Mr. and Mrs. Splenser are old-fangled people so they live in a nice old-fangled house with the farm round it. Mr. Splenser is writing the history of the House. King George when he was a little boy lived there, so it is very old. There are three rooms downstairs: a drawing-room with a grand piano, a dining-room and the kitchen. There are four rooms upstairs, one is Mr. Splenser's study, where he reads *The Times* and writes his history (although he is a farmer, not a parson). The other three rooms are Mr. and Mrs. Splenser's bedroom where Lister sleeps as well, the Poddies' nursery, where they sleep, and the bathroom. You may wonder how one of the rooms is kept up; well, there is a porch underneath, so *that* is all right.

The Splensers have lots of friends and neighbours. There is Mrs. Splenser's Widowed Aunt, who is very rich and beautiful. She runs a Land Agency with their friends Brigadier and Mrs. Kempington. They sell land to anyone who wants it. Then there's Mrs. Splenser's Other Aunt, called Mrs. Messer. She is married to a French policeman called Bonjour. Also there is another farmer who has a long name I cannot remember at the moment, but his short name is Blaikie. He is a General, but he is retired now.

Brigadier and Mrs. Kempington used to live in a Horsebox. One day Mr. and Mrs. Splenser and the Poddies went to stay with them (this was before Lister came). The Poddies had great fun climbing to the top of the Horsebox with Mrs. Kempington's washing. For she, poor woman, hadn't got a washing-line. The Kempingtons sold the Horsebox to a Carrier called Haglet, and now they live in a house which is really better for the Land Agency, but Mrs. Kempington still hasn't got a washing-line. She hangs the clothes on the roof.

All these people have lots of parties and concerts at the Splensers' house (it is called Splenser's Ground). First they have a concert in the drawing-room, then they go to the dining-room and have wine and healths. Then they have ham and speeches. It is all very gay and the dining-room is crowded out.

III. THE SPLENSERS HAYMAKE

One night Mr. Splenser thought he ought to do the haymaking, so next morning he said to his wife, 'Mrs. Splenser, my love, I thought last night that we ought to do the haymaking.'

'If you are going to do that you ought

to have your breakfast first to get your strength up,' said Mrs. Splenser.

Mr. Splenser got into the haymaking cart towed by the horse Greaseyheeler, and his workmen went with him. The hayrake came after them towed by a tractor.

Halfway through the morning an awful thing happened. Greaseyheeler got tired of trundling round in the hay, so she galloped out of the field taking the cart with her. Mr. Splenser rushed up to the house crying,

'Mrs. Splenser! Mrs. Splenser! The horse has run away with the cart and I am going in the tractor to catch her. The hayrake is rushing after her too.'

'Oh dear, oh dear, my lovable husband!' cried Mrs. Splenser, 'Do take care!'

Mr. Splenser jumped into the tractor. *Brrrr* (that's the tractor). They caught the horse and brought her back to the house. She had dropped a lot of hay out of the cart so the hayrake had to go and collect it.

And so Greaseyheeler was led home and Mrs. Splenser said,

'Ah, at last you have found her. Your lunch is getting cold.'

IV. THE SEAFARING SPLENSERS

One day Mr. Splenser was given a yacht, so he thought he would take the family sailing.

'Can I take my grand piano and have a concert as we sail out of harbour?' asked Mrs. Splenser.

'We can't take the grand piano because there isn't room on deck,' said Mr. Splenser.

Mrs. Splenser didn't say anything. She just turned her back at him and went off and bought a harp.

The day came and everybody was on the quay waving goodbye. Mrs. Splenser

sat on deck playing 'Ba Ba Black Sheep' on the harp as they left the harbour. The Poddies sang in a choir and Lister conducted them. Mr. Splenser sailed the boat.

Night fell and it grew rough so Mr. Splenser said to Mrs. Splenser, 'My dear, you had better go below and play your harp in the cabin.'

So Mrs. Splenser went below and played her harp and sang songs about the land until she failed, and then she went to her bunk.

Mr. Splenser made fast to a buoy and all night long he watched the bow of the yacht to see that it didn't bump. Mrs. Splenser slept in her bunk with Lister and the Poddies slept on deck because there was no room below. Suddenly one Poddy woke up because he heard a ship and Mr. Splenser said, 'We'd better move now.' So he untied the rope from the buoy and sailed off. The Poddy became the look-out man.

By this time Mrs. Splenser was up and cooking the breakfast. After breakfast Mr. Splenser said, 'We are now nearing land, Mrs. Splenser. Get your harp and play.'

So Mrs. Splenser got her harp and played 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' as they got nearer France. (The French people had sent them a cable before they started, saying, 'Please don't play "Frère Jacques", we are so tired of it').

When they landed in France their car was waiting for them: it had come by ferry.

They toured France and went to Paris. They went to see the Eifel Tower and Mrs. Splenser said, 'Don't let's go up to the top as I haven't got my harp to comfort me.'

So they went to a restaurant and Mrs. Splenser went in and brought out some wine and Spam sandwiches. Mrs. Splenser

said, 'It's too hot to sit here in the car, so what about driving under the Arc de Triomphe where we shall get some shade.' So they did, and they eat their lunch there.

When they drove back to Cherbourg they sent their car home by ferry and then sent a cable to Beaulieu to say that they were coming home and was their berth empty. When they got back to the Beaulieu River a Boat of Greeting came out to meet them and Mrs. Splenser played the harp to the man in the dinghy. They were directed into their berth and they put fenders out to stop the yacht bumping against the quay. Then the Mayor of Southampton, who happened to be staying in Beaulieu presented them with their anchor which they had left behind them.

When they got back to the farm all their friends were very glad to see them.

FLITTERMICE

by Sylvia Mary Redgrave, aged 13
(P.U.S. Home Schoolroom)

When the light is soft and grey,
the little bats come out to play,
hither and thither, round and round,
backwards and forwards, without a sound.

In and out among the trees,
with a soft little summer breeze,
one little bat to another one speaks
in a series of tiny high-pitched squeaks.

Flittering fluttering in and out,
and do you know what they're about?
they're catching the nasty insect things,
that bizz and buzz and give us stings.

So let us be glad if we see a wee bat,
so small it could easily get in your hat,
and if you should find one, small and brown,
leave him in peace, to sleep upside down.

ON READING THE BIBLE

by Selma Nankivell, aged 16
(Burgess Hill P.N.E.U. School,
Sussex)

WE HAVE THE BIBLE before us. We have never read any of it. Where should we begin?

I suppose the most obvious place is from the beginning, that is the beginning of the Old Testament, but this is really a bad place. The New Testament, being the most important, must be read first, but again I think it would be a mistake to begin at the beginning.

In my opinion the Acts should be read first. The Acts is a historical record. Unfortunately, I think, that the first part is written in rather a flat style, but as soon as St. Paul enters, it lives. The writer, St. Luke, took part in many of St. Paul's adventures, so naturally they were of more interest to him. Unfortunately it ends rather abruptly, and somewhere St. Luke mentions it as his second book, so we gather he meant to write a third, continuing from the last chapter of the Acts. Of course this book may have been written, and later lost.

The Gospels are arranged in the following order: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, though they were not written, and therefore should not be read in this order. Mark, written first, tells chiefly of the deeds of Our Lord. We are not certain whether Matthew or Luke were written next, but we do know that the writers of both had Mark before them as they wrote. It has been calculated that out of six hundred and sixty verses in St. Mark, Matthew and Luke contain six hundred and ten of them. Matthew and Luke contain more of his words and less of Our

Lord's deeds, and it has been suggested that the writers also had a document containing the sayings of Our Lord before them.

St. John was the last to be written. Unlike the other three, the question of its authorship is important, because many have said that St. John is not a Gospel, but a story about Our Lord imagined by someone. True, St. John is different from the others, but if the author had imagined the story, he would, surely, have made the fact clear to his readers, and it would not have been accepted by people in the second century, as it certainly was. It was written about the year A.D. 90, that is sixty years after Our Lord's death, yet the detail is startling, the answer is, I think, that St. John kept a diary, but not regularly for in his gospel there are large gaps.

I think, the Gospels are the most interesting part of the Bible.

After the Acts come the epistles, which are letters. There are three questions that must be answered before an epistle, or part of it, is read, in order to appreciate it fully. Question one is— who is the author? Question two is— why did he write it? Question three— to whom did he write it?

For example, the epistle to the Galatians, St. Paul has established a firm church in Galatia, of which he was proud, but there were people who followed Paul undoing all his work. These people told the Galatians that Paul was not an apostle, therefore his teaching was false, and he had no right to teach. So in the beginning of his epistle to the Galatians, St. Paul writes, 'Paul an apostle, not of man, but of Jesus Christ.'

If we learn a few facts about the epistles before we read them, or hear them read

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in Church, we can get far more enjoyment from them.

The Bible we read is the Authorised version, which King James ordered to be translated, between 1604-1611, from the original Greek text. Besides being a sacred work, the Bible is above all a literary one, there are some poetic passages, and the parables are the best short stories in the world. Many people have written a book on the same plot, and then the meaning has not been so clear.

I think the Psalms contain some of the most beautiful passages, for example Psalm 23.

'He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside still waters

...
'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of Death, I will fear no evil.'

But there are muddled passages, which are difficult to understand. Such passages appear often in the epistles, and should not be read verse by verse, but as a whole. Also modern translations should be used. The Revised Version, written in 1881, is a help, as is Dr. Moffat's translation, yet neither have the beauty of the Authorised version: 'Jesus wept'. In Dr. Moffat's translation, the same is written: 'Jesus burst into tears.'

The last book of the New Testament, Revelation is fascinating. It is Apocalyptic, that is it contains visions or dreams, in this case of St. John. It can be read in different ways. I read them paying special attention to the pictures it paints. It is another good example of poetry in the Bible, 'I am Alpha and Omega the first and the last.'

When we have read the New Testament we must look at the Old. With this we

may start at the beginning with Genesis. Here we get the passage about the creation of the world. Of course we cannot take this literally, it is the belief of the people of the time.

The books of the Old Testament are historical, telling the stories of the Tribes of Israel.

One of my favourite books is Isaiah, especially the parts telling of the coming of the Messiah.

'And the government shall be upon his shoulders.

'And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace.'

SUNSET

by Vere Dodds, aged 11

(Ashbourne P.N.E.U. School, Derby)

O can't you see
That beauty lies before you?
The sun so red, the sky so pink.
O can't you see?

O can't you see
At sunset, lambs being driven?
Down from the hills, before the night.
O can't you see?

O can't you see,
While standing on the hill,
Clouds are meeting, birds are sleeping,
O can't you see?

O can't you see,
The sun is sinking downward?
And for the night you must go home,
Downward from the lee.

SOME MUSICAL MOODS)

by Susan Thompson, aged 16

(Burgess Hill P.N.E.U. School, Sussex)

THROUGH MUSIC moods can be expressed more easily than through words, but that is so with all the arts, for moods can be expressed through painting as easily as through music. It depends on whether the artist is musically or artistically bent; if he is the former he expresses himself through music, if he is the latter he expresses himself through painting. For instance, both Cesar Franck and Fra Angelico are said to be mystics, the one in music and the other in art.

There are many different musical moods which different composers express in different ways. Take Tchaikowsky as an example of a very emotional composer who expressed his varying moods in his correspondingly varied music. In his sixth symphony, the Pathétique, he shews many different moods. The first movement is an expectant, slowish movement, opening with a sinister bass melody. It is as though the composer himself hardly knew what was coming next and was hesitating throughout. There is a most beautiful melody introduced later in the movement that has an almost sad note in it, it is so beautiful. The second movement must have been written when Tchaikowsky was in a more cheerful mood, for the principle theme is a jolly one and is unusually written in five-four time. The third movement expresses a mood of reckless gaiety with a swinging melody that shews that the composer must have been in a state of great joy; maybe he had just received help in time of need from his benefactress, Madame von Meck. Then the fourth movement seems sad

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again; there is a plaintive melody in mysterious harmony, played by the strings, which seems to express sorrow or longing; and the Symphony ends on a quiet note. Tchaikowsky must have been sad throughout the last movement.

In Tchaikowsky's Piano Concerto in B Minor many moods are expressed in the first movement alone. It opens with chords, and then a melody that fills one with a sensation of power; then it quietens down to a lovely lilting movement played on the strings. Unfortunately the opening bars are never repeated in the same grand style. If Tchaikowsky had been feeling angry or anxious or had been suffering from any pent-up feeling inside himself he could have lost it all in the composing of so wonderful a theme.

In musical variations such as Elgar's Enigma Variations musical moods are clearly expressed. The most well-known of the Enigma Variations is Nimrod, the sad and lovely melody of which is played by massed bands at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday.

Elgar might have been feeling sad when he wrote this lovely melody, but at times throughout the Variations he writes cheerfully and with humour, as in the piece about the lady with the stutter. Another composition by Elgar which shews a musical mood is the Pomp and Circumstance March Number 1. Elgar is said to have written the first part of the march while in a brisk, vigorous mood, but on waking one morning in a happier frame of mind he began to sing and then and there the well-known song 'Land of Hope and Glory' was born. This was fitted into the Pomp and Circumstance March, and makes a variety of musical moods in its soft, lovely melody.

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A composer such as Beethoven had many musical moods and this is well shewn in his compositions. His symphonies shew a general briskness throughout, though there are soft passages in all. Beethoven is a good example of a composer whose musical mood could change completely. You have only to look at his Pastoral Symphony to see how totally different it is from any other of his symphonies. There is the scene set before you — the arrival in the country, the peasants merry-making, the scene by the brook with the notes of the cuckoo and nightingale coming through at the end, the gathering storm ending the merry-making, then the storm itself where you have Beethoven at his best illustrating the noise of the storm; and then the calm and beautiful Shepherd's Hymn of Thanksgiving after the storm comes softly to you and the country scene closes. Throughout the whole Symphony, with the exception perhaps of the storm movement, there is a note of simplicity of mood and style that is rarely found in Beethoven's normally rather grand, pompous music. This Symphony gains its attraction partly from its simple form, for it is easy enough for any to understand.

I do not know why it is but the music of the old masters in the Polyphonic Period seems to lack the variety of musical mood found in more recent composers. The style of writing in those days was more universal, and there seems to be less individuality in the music. Musical moods of various kinds can however be found, though perhaps they are less obvious than the more modern composers' moods. In Bach's music, for instance, you find such things as the ordinary fugal forms, or gavottes and minuets that are typical of his

period; but on the other hand there are lovely melodies by him that are noted for their original beauty and expression of a more thoughtful mood in Bach. Such melodies are his Air on the G String, found in his Suite in D, and also the lovely melody to which words have been put, forming the anthem 'Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring'. In Handel's 'Messiah' too there is much variety of musical mood expressed, for instance what a difference there is between the air 'I know that my Redeemer liveth' and the 'Hallelujah Chorus'. The one is so quiet and simple, the other so rousing and impressive that it is always played with the audience standing.

Another composer who has written much to express musical moods is Debussy. His piano music is most important for he was himself a skilled pianist and understood the instrument. He belonged to the Impressionist School which preceeded the Romantics. The Impressionist composers tried to avoid anything too formal or conventional, and they disregarded discords in order to produce the desired musical moods. In 'The Gollywogs' Cake-Walk' from Debussy's piano concerto 'Nursery Suite' you see a cheerful side of the composer; on the other hand, in the same suite you can hear a quiet and vague piece in 'The Little Shepherd'. Another piece, this time orchestral, that expresses a quiet vagueness in Debussy is 'L'Après Midi d'une Faune'. Debussy used the instruments of the orchestra to produce his effects and he used them well. But he was not content with the way in which he expressed himself, he was not expressing himself freely enough and he felt the need for a greater outlet of emotional ideas. So he compiled

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the whole-tone scale which is so characteristically used throughout all Debussy's music, and he found that by using it he could satisfy the longing to express itself further that his spirit had seemed to crave for.

Perhaps Debussy was the greatest composer who expressed his own moods through his music, because whereas his predecessors had expressed their moods through the conventional rules of music, Debussy created new rules of his own, and wandered completely from conventional ideas. If a composer is freely to express his musical moods he must drop all laws and be absolutely free or his expression will not be coming completely from himself. The most common musical moods are joy and sorrow, but anger, anxiety, passion and fear are freely expressed in the music of some composers. I do not think that the moods must be taken too literally because they might then be misinterpreted. I do not suppose that it is any easier to understand a musical mood than to understand a mood expressed outwardly by a human being.

A FAMOUS STREET

by Anne Heathcote, aged 15
(St. Margaret's P.N.E.U. School,
Ludlow)

THERE ARE MANY famous streets in the world, for instance, Watling Street or Regent Street; but these are just roads which you will hear of many more times than you will actually walk on, or know. Surely, a famous street ought to be one which a person knows very well, and which recalls to his memory things in his life. No other road deserves this title more than the one that leads you home.

A person will never tread more on any road than the one that leads him home, and it is the one which is recalled many more times than any other. Often you wish yourselves there, because it gives you a feeling of security and you are no longer afraid.

When you are young, this road is the one which you walk down to all your adventure lands. You may be sitting by a tree trunk making mud pies when something will distract you — perhaps only a stick, yet it immediately becomes a sword. Then you will don your war paint and leave for the land of Imagination. You walk sedately down the steps and go with quickening paces, run towards the scaled and fiery dragon. As you go, you notice the Vargessa tree with its three eyes, and jump over the stone that lies just near the bunch of sungrass.

At last, you return victorious, with the dragon on a rope, trailing behind you. Suddenly you find yourself back by the stone and you know that you are near home again. Perhaps a little sorry to leave Imagination you plod on, knowing that the road you are on will lead you home, to rest and to the place where no strange thing will emerge from behind a door and stab you — because you are going home.

Later, when you are older, you may have to leave home. It is then that Ambition comes your way, and you will again leave from Bedland to Imagination, by express. However far away you are from home, it is always down your home road that you will walk, either on the king's arm, or speeding towards the door in your own streamlined motor car. Even if the road is narrow and untarred it will not seem inferior to you, and nothing can stop you from making that road the famous one.

Sometimes when you feel that you must go out for a walk, you know that you must leave by the same road that you have always left by. Yet you will not grow tired of it, as you do of some roads.

This road is the one with which you associate many things. You have known it for a long time, and you have never walked on any other road more than this. Walk down a town street, and you will be intrigued by all the shops; yet when you have been down it four or five times you will not walk down it again to see anything, until new things appear in it.

The home road is one of which you never grow tired. There will always be something new to notice, and however plain it is you will love it.

A famous person or thing is one that is held high in a person's esteem. You may admire it, or be grateful to it. What large street can a person really love unless he lives there? He may like it, but it is only the road that leads you home that you love. You never tire of it, and often yearn for it. That is the reason why the home road deserves the title of being a really famous street.

A ROYAL OCCASION

February 24th, 1951

by Rachel Moodie, aged 12
(P.N.E.U. School, Queen's Gardens,
London, W.2)

WHEN I ARRIVED at the Central Hall, Westminster, there were not very many people there, but the men were selling pictures of Her Royal Highness, Princess Elizabeth, and His Royal Highness, Prince Charles, because it was to this concert that Princess Elizabeth was coming. Soon

people began to arrive, and I saw that a few more of the bodyguard, of which I was a member, had begun to assemble.

At 10.30, when most of the bodyguard had arrived, we were each handed a small spray of spring flowers by Lady Mayer; the boys had white carnations, and the girls mixed sprays of flowers. When all the bodyguard had their flowers safely pinned to their coats, the other people were asked to go to their seats upstairs.

At 10.55 we all stood in a semi-circle at the top of the stairs leading from the entrance, and Lady Mayer's daughter represented Princess Elizabeth walking up the steps. When she came to the top of the steps, all the girls curtsied, and the boys bowed. After we had practised this a good many times it was eleven o'clock, and we were ready for the Princess to arrive.

Suddenly a large black car drew up outside the entrance, the door opened, and out stepped Princess Elizabeth, and her Lady-in-Waiting. As the Princess ascended the stairs, the Press photographers took many pictures. Sir Robert Mayer, who had been presented to Princess Elizabeth, accompanied her round the semi-circle, and she spoke to several members of the bodyguard. She was wearing a very simple royal blue coat, with a hat of the same colour, trimmed with a pale blue sweeping feather. She carried a blue handbag, and wore high-heeled black shoes.

When Her Royal Highness had completed the inspection of the bodyguard, she walked up the stairs, while the bodyguard formed up behind her. Once in her place, the Concert began.

The first item on the programme was 'The Mastersingers' followed by 'The Flying Dutchman' and 'Lohengrin Grail Narration,' then came 'Lohengrin

Prelude' and a duet from 'The Mastersingers'. The programme concluded with 'Siegfried' and 'Rosenkavalier'. All these pieces are composed by Wagner except the last piece 'Rosenkavalier' which is by Strauss. When the Concert was ended several people were presented to Princess Elizabeth, and so the great occasion drew to a close.

A FISHING TRIP TO SHIPS COVE

by Dinah Davies, aged 12

(Selwyn House P.N.E.U. School,
New Zealand)

ONE DAY in the Christmas holidays when we were at the Sounds we decided to go on a fishing trip to Ships Cove. Mummy came, and three of my Aunts, and my cousins, and also some friends. We got a boat called 'The Sharmaine' to come to our little jetty and pick us up. We all took our bathing suits as we knew we could swim at Ships Cove.

As we went past the heads which go into Picton it looked very pretty on the edge of the blue sea. At last we reached Ships Cove which is the first place Captain Cook landed at when he came into New Zealand. He landed there because he wanted water to drink and we saw the creek that he got his water from. We could also see where he had his little garden high up on the hill. As soon as we got off the boat we ran down a track and across the stream to a big stone monument which is Captain Cook's Memorial. It is a big one with a huge anchor, which was the one he had on his boat, on the top. There were old guns at the sides of it.

Then we had our picnic lunch by the stream. Then a lovely big sailing ship

came into the bay called the 'Cutty Sark.' It did not have its sail up but it looked very beautiful sailing on the sparkling sea. Mummy had seen it being built at Redcliffs in Summer. Ships Cove is very pretty with native bush all over it. There are many New Zealand Fern trees in the bush.

Then we all went fishing and caught many cod and I got a fish-hook in my finger which my Uncle pulled out with a rusty pair of pliers!

We came home after that. We were very tired but happy as we had had a lovely day.

SAMUEL SCARECROW

by Gillian Cowley, aged 14

(Overstone P.N.E.U. School)

SAMUEL SCARECROW lived in a field belonging to Farmer Green of Willow Farm. He had been in that field for a very long time and he could not even remember when he first came there. He was a happy-go-lucky scarecrow and never minded how hot or how cold he was.

One unfortunate day he was moved to the back garden of Mrs. Snark, who was a grumpy, harsh lady. Sammy would never have endured it, if it had not been for the gardener's boy, Tommy. He was a jolly lad, but very lonely living with his grandmother at the end of Mrs. Snark's drive, and when Sammy was moved to the back garden he would sit and talk to Sammy as if he were his brother. Sammy always answered him in human language until he was quite friendly with Tommy.

One day Mrs. Snark had a learned professor to tea, and after tea she showed him around her garden. Suddenly her eyes settled on Tom seated on an upturned

bucket, his head in his hands, talking to Sammy.

'Boy, what do you think you are doing?' she said, and then in an undertone to the professor, 'The boy is mad. He talks to the scarecrow as if he were real.' The professor smiled, 'Little boy,' he said 'would you like to have a companion to work with you?'

'Oh yes, sir,' replied the eager boy 'but there is no one.'

'Wait and see!' said the old man, and going up to Sammy he touched his straw-filled arm with a little stick he had in his pocket. At once a change seemed to come over Sammy. His arms and legs filled out with flesh, his straw face became flesh, and before the old lady's astonished gaze, a boy's cheeky face peered at her.

'Well — well! . . .'

'Yes, yes,' said the professor 'we all understand. Sammy, for that is your name is it not? You and Tom are to go and help Farmer Green at Willow Farm with the harvesting to-morrow. So be up early.'

The two boys looked at each other fascinated, and joyfully they thanked the old man for his kindness.

The next morning the two boys were 'up with the larks' and tramped out of the town into the country. Here they helped Father Green, for that is what they grew to call him, and grew ruddy and happy. On the days they did not go to work they would go for long walks over dales and hills, and then lie under the trees and eat their lunch. One day Tom casually asked Sammy if he ever remembered being a scarecrow.

'O yes,' he cried, 'quite well. You see I was a naughty untidy little boy and I was told I would turn into a scarecrow because I was so untidy. But that was about a hundred years ago. I went to

sleep and remembered nothing until you woke me up. But I remember I could not move my arms as they have no feeling.'

Sammy and Tom grew up together; and if you visit a farm where there are two small boys working together, you will remember that they are Tom and Sammy.

PAGES FROM MY NOTEBOOK

by Ruth Farmer, aged 8
(Home Schoolroom, Victoria,
Australia)

The Little Oil-Lamp

THE LITTLE OIL-LAMP stands on the kitchen mantel-piece. It has a blue bottom which holds the oil, and a brass holder which takes the white globe, and a brass winder which turns the wick up and down. It is very small. Indeed it is only five inches high. We bought it in the City of Melbourne, but it was not made there, for on the globe is a label which says, 'Foreign,' so before it was sold it must have had an exciting journey over the seas. We have not used it yet, because the electric light has not gone off, but when it does we shall light the little oil-lamp, put it on the middle of the table, and play 'Happy Families' in its little light.

Happiness

When I woke up the sun was shining gloriously, and the sky was the brightest blue you ever saw. When I went to feed the ducks I saw a brown lizard on the way. I opened the door of the duck-house and found two baby ducklings out of their shells. One was bright yellow, and the other was yellow and black.

In the afternoon I picked up a bright green frog. His home is in the long green grass in the orchard by the ditch.

The night was hot, but when I jumped into bed the sheets were cool and white.

A Fairy Story

One day I was walking by a wood when I saw a man drop a match, and oh, the wood caught on fire and he was burnt up.

The trees were burnt up, and oh, no one could walk in the wood because the cinders were so black that it took 59 years to clean your shoes.

One day a man came into the wood with a broom, and he had his old shoes on. He swept the wood and put the cinders in a heap so people could walk there.

Soon no one could walk in that beautiful wood because the men built houses and cities.

A VISIT TO PARLIAMENT

by Gillian Reekie, aged 11 years
(Kerrywood P.N.E.U. School,
Bromley)

BEFORE MORNING PRAYERS at school, Mrs. Hardman, our head mistress took six girls to the Houses of Parliament.

When we got to the station, we met Mr. Dobson, he was the librarian at the House of Lords. He was going to show us round the Houses of Parliament. We went by train to Victoria and then changed for the underground. We then came out, just outside the Houses of Parliament.

We entered at the Westminster Hall, which was still in repair. At the end of the Hall we saw where Charles was executed or beheaded. Then we saw some long corridors; we went down them and came to St. Stephen's Hall, where we saw some statues of Pitt and Fox standing opposite each other, we also saw a statue of Lord Chatham, and a few other famous

persons. Mr. Dobson took us into the Royal Gallery, where we saw a large picture of the Battle of Trafalgar, where Nelson was fighting. There were other pictures as well, but not so interesting as we did not know about them.

Then we went to the library where Mr. Dobson worked and saw all the great books. We saw all the Times papers in volumes dating back to the 18th century. We also saw in some glass cases, some letters written by famous people. I saw a Bible in beautiful black print with lovely capital letters, printed in 1562; and I saw a letter written by Nelson after he had lost his right arm: he wrote about his Victory at the Battle of the Nile river. We went into the House of Lords, and then the House of Commons; it was the proper House of Lords which they had given up graciously, when the House of Commons had been bombed. We saw the Dispatch Boxes, and the gallery, and the seat where Mr. Speaker sits.

We went on to the balcony after that, and saw Westminster Bridge. When we came in we saw a sword that had been dug up in the back of the Thames. Its date was about 8th or 9th Century A.D. It was very rusty and part of the handle had gone.

All the things belonging to the Commons was green, and everything belonging to the Lords were red. We saw a model of Old Westminster Parliament; and all the lights would go on in the windows. There was no Big Ben in those days, and it did not look a bit like Parliament without that Grand Clock.

Then we had to go home, and after going through Westminster Abbey we went on a bus to the station. After saying goodbye to Mr. Dobson we caught the train back to school.

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A JOURNEY TO THE NEAR EAST

by Ann Bayfield, aged 14
(Snelsmore House P.N.E.U. School,
Nr. Newbury)

IT WAS ON October 20th, 1948, that we were flying to Syria. The taxi came for us at 9.30 p.m. and took us to Airways House, Victoria. We heard our name called on the loudspeaker, and we went through the lounge into the yard where three B.O.A.C. buses were waiting. We were then taken to Heathrow Airport, where our luggage was checked, labelled and taken to the plane. Meanwhile we waited in the lounge until the passengers were wanted.

At about 10.30 p.m., we were all told to follow the Air Hostess to the plane. This we did, but at the same time we were rather excited never having flown before. The plane seemed huge. It was a sky-master, and seated about thirty-eight. We made our way up the gangway and into the plane.

When the pilot was in the cock-pit, and the plane was ready to take off, a little red block was lighted up, bearing the words 'No smoking, please tighten your safety belts now!' The plane taxied along the runway, and after about five minutes — 'we were off.'

It was a queer feeling at first but when we looked out of the window we could see London below us. It seemed a mass of little little lights. On we went, up — up, right above the clouds. It was night-time and we were covered up with rugs and told to rest, the lights in the plane were turned off.

When we awoke we were at Malta, where we stayed for about four hours. Malta is a lovely place, very sunny and hot,

and the scenery appears rocky, and rather sandy. We had a meal in the Officers' mess, and then back to the plane. After about fourteen hours flying, we sighted beneath us the sand of Damascus.

The plane began to circle and the ground seemed nearer and nearer. We could see a shack-like place in the distance, which was the custom's house. However, after about ten minutes taxiing down the runway, we came to a stand-still. We alighted the steps and found ourselves in the bright sunlight. It was exceedingly hot and we shed coats etc. My uncle and his friend was there to meet us. They escorted us to the customs-house. It was no bigger than a small shed, and was packed full with people of many different nationalities. We handed our passports in, we were there for literally hours. After all this we went out into the sweltering heat again. We got into an American taxi. An Arab drove it.

After about two hours travelling up the hillside of Anti-Lebanon, we stopped outside Hotel Arabique, where we had a Syrian tea consisting of Arab bread, olive oil, and sour milk. But we were very hungry so we ate it without a murmur.

When we had finished tea, we got into the taxi again and made our way past fields of rather scorched looking grass. Men could be seen selling melons, and families of Arabs walking by the roadside, the men rode the donkeys and the women followed with all the luggage and goods.

The houses were of stone, the people dirty and untidy looking, with yashmaks, and the men with tarbooshes, they wore no sandals.

At last we wended our way through Lebanon, into Beyrouth. The first thing that struck us, was the lines and lines of cars, parked in the centre of the road. The shops were gaily lit, and everything seemed

alive with excitement, and enjoyment. As we came out of Beyrouth, the noise of voices died away and the sound of Arab music came to our ears, and we could see groups of Syrians sitting round a table smoking their hubble-bubble pipes, outside some oriental cafe.

On we went, and after a while came into the district of Ras Beyrouth. Here, were many blocks of flats, cream, and very big. We passed down Rue El Hamra and then stopped dead outside a block of flats. We got out of the car, and went through the porch, where we saw an Arab man, who looks after the flats, his name was Ahmoud.

We went inside. It was a glorious apartment, with five large rooms and a front room, with three rooms making the one. We were all very tired so we climbed into bed, and fell fast asleep. It was our first night in Syria, it only seemed a minute ago that we had left London Airport.

Now to the doings of the Eastern peoples, and the scenery. There are many different kinds of Arabs. The Moslem, the Bedouin, and other cliques. The Mohammedan men wear tarbooshes or fezzes, and the women black veils. The Bedouins are the next important really, they are, some of them, Palestinian refugees, they wear a white head-dress and two bands of black cord going round it.

Most of the 'locals,' are very poor, and as you walk down the streets you can see beggars sitting by the wayside asking for 'Baksheish.' Small boys can be seen walking around with trays on their heads with Arab loaves. Also, there is the ice-cream man who pushes a trolley round and cries out something like this 'Boosasteik!' meaning 'Ices.'

When a baby is born in Beyrouth, there is great rejoicing. The Arabs stand round

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the hut where the baby is born and clap and chant. When there is a death, crowds and crowds of Arabs follow wailing and mourning after the coffin.

Most of the Arabs speak French fluently as well as Arabic, but some try to speak English.

There is a lovely university in Beyrouth called the A.U.B. It is surrounded by beautiful grounds, we often used to play there or go for walks. They held football matches there, etc.

Oranges, bananas, and mish-mish, melons and strawberries are plentiful in Syria. Once a man was walking along eating a banana, and he handed it to another man to have a bite, then went on casually. Time means nothing to the Arab, so long as it gets done sometime. They have the 'Ramazar' which is a feast, and when we have Christmas, they come up to you and hand you a card bearing 'Bon Noel.' In this way they are very hospitable.

It is nothing to see men having a shave, while they take coffee in the morning, and there are the little shoe-shine boys, who, shine your shoes, if you will put them out; for this you usually give them a few piastres.

The scenery in Lebanon is lovely, and when it is very hot, most Europeans go up into the mountains for a while. Aley and Aandoun are lovely places to have picnics.

For two months it is very cold and they have the 'Khamsin,' wind. It is bitterly cold, and many of the Arabs cannot find shelter, to keep the biting winds from them, some die during this season. It is not the same cold as the cold of England, it is dry.

Beyrouth is a very important port, and flourishes exceedingly well. The cost of living is very high, and a pound of

oranges would cost eighty piastres which is about one shilling and fourpence.

Damascus is the capital of Syria, and is a wonderful place, which was founded before Rome itself. Damascus is surrounded by vineyards, olive groves, and lovely gardens. The streets are very wide, and the buildings are of a fair size. The scenery of the streets are akin to that of Beyrouth.

The motto of the Eastern peoples, is 'Ya Allah illahalah Mohammed erusulalah,' which means 'There is no god but God and Mohammed is His Prophet.'

CHILDREN'S NEWSPAPERS IN VICTORIA

by Jean Farmer, aged 12
(Home Schoolroom, Victoria,
Australia)

IN VICTORIA there are four daily papers published in Melbourne, three are morning papers and one is an evening paper. There are other weekly papers, but of them I have no knowledge.

The morning papers include once a week a children's paper. We read *The Age*, which gives on every Friday *The Junior Age*, which is a fine children's newspaper. It is a single sheet, which folds into eight pages.

On the first page is news of recent happenings in Melbourne which interest children, such as outings for schoolboys which are run by the Y.M.C.A. and an account of the stamp exhibition.

There are three written serials — 'Dangerous Holiday,' 'Sky Pirates' and 'Tom Flynn.' At the moment all the characters in the stories are boys. They are exciting stories, which take place in the Australian bush.

On the two middle pages are published contributions sent in by members, who must be under seventeen. The drawings, poetry and stories are often clever and well done. The letters upon the Topic of the Week are included and we may send a letter to the editor upon any subject we wish and the most interesting are published on the middle pages.

On another two pages are published the week's competitions, which are in three sections by age, sevens and under, eight to twelve, and thirteen to sixteen. On another page are notes on science, a career, a great man, and a book review. On one page is a drawing strip of the actions of an unreal little creature called Doodle-Bug. The back page is taken up with two picture serials.

We have had articles on how to make toys and presents and cookery recipes how to play tennis and now there are sketches showing us how to draw.

The Junior Age is very interesting and I think that its members look forward to Friday, it costs nothing to join, but there is a form to fill up and send in then the Editor send you a Membership Certificate.

The Editors give generous prizes and those who win a postal-order feel very pleased. If your competition entry or contribution is not good enough to win a prize, you may win a brown or green certificate. When you have twenty-five of the same colour, you may send them to the editor and receive a 5/- postal order. These certificates help you to keep on trying.

The Junior Age is the children's very own paper, and I think that all newspapers should produce a children's paper of similar high quality. Every week Victoria children can be proud of *The Junior Age*.

ROUMANIAN SCENE

by Pamela Rose, aged 16
(Burgess Hill P.N.E.U. School,
Sussex)

The little village high up on the slopes,
Seems all asleep, until a rising cock
Denounces sleep, and breaks the stillness there,
And stirs the boy who tends the village flock.
He takes his stick and wakes the mountain goats
And coming down the mountainside so steep,
He runs and jumps as agile as the rest
For on this day they celebrate a feast.
And now the people bustle to and fro,
Their clothes are fit for such a special day,
The tables laid on village green below,
The sun shines down with ever brightening ray.
By noon the green is thronged with people
gay,
The reds and blues and golds of special dress
Are like a rainbow after cooling rain,
They sparkle with a shining loveliness.
But swiftly disappears the splendored food,
And aged rest and take their well-earned ease,
While youthful couples full of love and hope,
Depart, and stroll beneath the whispering trees.
So flies the afternoon, and evening shades
Awake the old and young to more delight,
An ancient fiddler, gnarled as a tree,
Comes forward, tunes, and plays a melody
bright.
But all good things must end, and as the
moon
Begins to show her light in silvery gleams,
The echoes ring from shouts of parting
groups
Who make their homeward way, and on to
dreams.

THE KING AND HIS WIVES— A YORUBA STORY

by Agbeke Animashoun, aged 12
(Staff P.N.E.U. School, Ibadan)

ONCE UPON A TIME there was a king who had six wives. He married one more that make seven; the last seventh one had no teeth. When all of them were speaking the seventh one was laughing with them, one saw that she had no teeth.

So the one who saw her went and reported to the king. The king said that it was not true. The king said if it is true all of you must come here in seven days time. When the one that had no teeth heard that they had to come in seven days time she heard also that the one that had no teeth would have her head cut off. They will put it in the barrel of tar. Then the woman that had no teeth went crying and she saw an African doctor, the doctor said 'Why are you crying?' and she said, they went and reported me to the king that I had no teeth and the king said, 'the one that has no teeth will have her head cut off.'

So the African doctor gave her some African medicine to put in her mouth, and he told her 'You must not speak until the day comes.' So she went home.

When the seven days had gone, they all of them had to sing one by one. Here is there song.

Eleyin lefuala Le O . . . Lefuala
Kiwo se yin ke mi se yin . . . Lefuala
Ayin wa lenu mi . . . Lefuala
Ti-ka-ka ta-ke-ke . . . Lefuala.

When it was the turn of the one that went and reported, there is no teeth in her mouth, she covered her mouth with her hand when she wanted to sing, they told her, 'Take your hand off and sing.'

When she was singing they saw that *she* had no teeth, and they cut her head off instead and put it inside the barrel of tar. The one that had no teeth before, some teeth came into her mouth. So this story tells us not to tell tales on each other.

P.U.S. JUBILEE PRAYER by Michael Franklin

(These verses are intended for recitation, with the appropriate texts from the Bible interposed by a chorus in the background.)

To every child a clarion call
Down sixty years there echoes still,
And proudly do we speak the words
'I am, I can, I ought, I will.'
Lord, let me not unworthy be
Of these bright words that came to me.

(And God said to Moses, I AM THAT I AM. And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness—Genesis.)

I AM, because God gave me life,
I AM, because what man has done
Has gone to make me what I am,
The tasks achieved, the battles won.
Lord, let me not unworthy be
Of all of Thee that is in me.

(And such as had ability in them to stand in the King's Palace—Daniel I, 3.)

I CAN the great endeavour make,
The mountains CAN be surely moved,
The deadly giants conquered,
The stainless courage sternly proved.
Lord, let me not unworthy be
Of all the power that's in me.

(Let us hear the conclusions of the whole matter. Fear God and keep His Commandments, for this is the whole duty of man—Ecclesiastes XII, 13.)

I OUGHT—Not frail compulsion here
Because of any man-made law,
But rather inspiration keen
Of everything worth fighting for.
Lord, let me not unworthy be
The truth and light that is in me.

(We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed—Jeremiah XLIII, 25.)

I WILL be true to greatness now,
I WILL achieve the distant goal,
I WILL the evil things of life
Combat with mind and heart and soul.
Lord, let me not unworthy be
And do Thou bend my will to Thee.

(In the Lord do I put my trust. How say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain—Psalm XI, 1.)

BIRDS

by Sally Cresswell, aged 9
(Home Schoolroom)

The robin is a cheeky bird,
So very full of fun,
He hops about quite close to you,
And fear! why he has none.

The bluetit is so pretty,
With plumage blue and green,
And yellow too, adorns his breast,
As often can be seen.

The blackbird is a glossy black,
His wife is dullish brown,
Though often seen in country,
They are seldom seen in town.

'Cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo,'
In May, June and July,
He sings and then next month,
Why, he away will fly.

P.N.E.U. School
Ashbourne
Derbyshire
Le 18 Mars 1951

Mon cher Georges,

Je t'ai dit dans ma dernière lettre que j'allais rentrer dans une nouvelle école. Elle s'appelle la P.N.E.U. (Parents' National Educational Union). Garçons et filles, nous portons un uniforme gris et une cravate aux couleurs bleu, marron et blanc. Sur le béret ou la casquette, il y a un écusson que je vais essayer de te dessiner. Cette école est assez différente de la tienne. Par exemple on rentre en classe

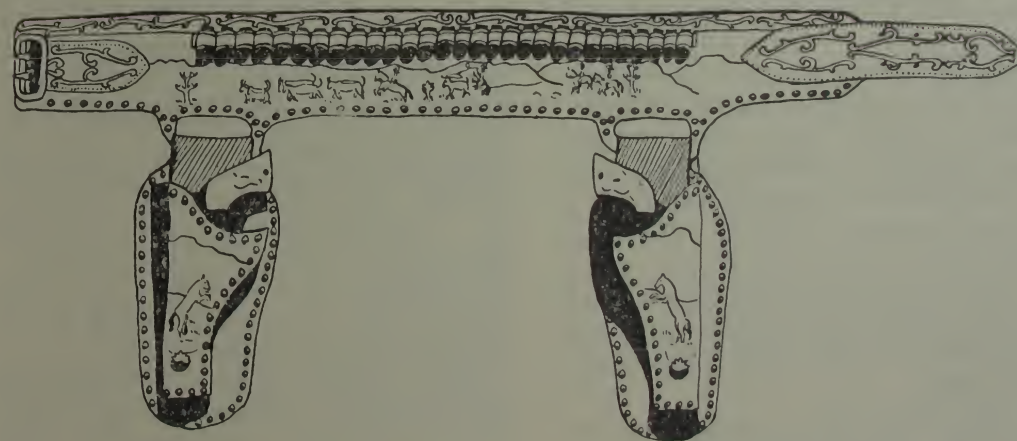
à neuf heures et non huit comme en France, et on n'a jamais de devoirs à faire à la maison. J'ai cinq maitresses et l'une d'elles m'enseigne la danse, ce que j'aime beaucoup. Pour les leçons de choses, on se promène dans la nature et on observe les arbres, les plantes et les oiseaux.

Malgré cela, il y a des choses que se ressemblent: les garçons se conduisent souvent comme ceux de ton école et les filles sont quelquefois aussi bavardes qu'en France.

Ecris-moi vite et donne-moi des nouvelles de tout le monde.

Affectueusement,

LISBETH BEHAR (aged 8)



This belt was designed and executed by SUSAN ELAND STEWART, aged 15, Fairfield P.N.E.U. School, Ambleside, for Johnny Denis, the film actor and broadcaster. It is thought that the photograph of the complete cowboy's outfit will be on view in the Craft Section of the Festival of Britain Exhibition.

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A GAME FOR A WET DAY

by Marion Kinross, aged 8
(Flexlands P.N.E.U. School,
Chobham, Surrey)

I HAVE GOT a chest in my bedroom and it is full of dressing up's.

So me and Matthew and some-times Cecilia, dress up in them. And we have the greatest of fun.

Matthew likes the top-hat and Cecilia loves to be a boy, and lastely I love to be in a evening dress and a fox fur.

HOW I TOOK UP SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

by Christine Matthews
(ex-P.U.S. Pupil)

UNTIL I WENT to school at twelve and a half I was taught by governesses at home. The last two were Swiss-French and I did all my lessons in French and spoke French nearly all the time. After a while I could speak quite fluently but I was backward in other subjects. When I went to Manor House School I had never done any Geometry, Algebra or Latin and was bad at Arithmetic. At Manor House, Armagh, I got very interested in Mathematics and used to work at them in my spare time to catch up with the others in my class. The whole class did not have to be at the same stage, we each worked on from wherever we had got to, and this suited me very well as I was behind in some subjects and further on in others.

When Manor House split up I went on to Wood Lodge with Mrs. Shelley. There I first started to do Science. We had Astronomy lessons which interested me greatly and we also did Botany and

Zoology, which I did not like so much. I did some Higher Mathematics as well.

I had thought for some time that I should like to have a career, but had not thought of anything which I particularly wanted to do. One day the maths mistress told us about the idea of a fourth dimension. This interested me very much and I thought here was something I would really like to do—find the fourth dimension!

Mrs. Shelley thought I should go to a university and said that I might get a scholarship. She suggested that I should do either Science or Languages and advised me to do Science, as she thought I had more ability in that direction. I had not done much Physics or Chemistry but I thought I would like to do Science better than Languages. Although I could still speak French quite well and had done some German, I was not good at Literature and I was more interested in Science.

When I had taken my School Certificate Mrs. Shelley suggested that I should go to Alexandra College, Dublin, as there was no laboratory at Wood Lodge. I was very sorry to leave, but it was time I started specialising in Science. I was at Alexandra College for two years and started to do Physics and Chemistry there. I went on with other subjects also, but spent most of my time doing Science. I was working for a scholarship to London University; I had thought of Cambridge, but it was very hard to get in at that time as ex-service people were admitted first.

About a month before I was to sit for my scholarship examination my father died very suddenly. I did not do the exam but went to Trinity College, Dublin, instead. There I did the Honour Course in Experimental Science—Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics—for the first

three years. When I first started Science I found Chemistry more interesting than Physics, but later I became more interested in Physics, so in my last year I specialized in Experimental Physics. My Mathematics were not good enough to do Theoretical Physics.

I had always wanted to do research work when I had finished, but the kind of work done in a university appealed to me more than individual research, where one is obliged to consider the practical application first. I also wanted to stay in Dublin, if possible, so when I saw an advertisement for an assistant to the Professor of Chemistry and Physics in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, I applied. I got the job, which consists in taking practicals and giving a few lectures in Chemistry and Physics to pre-medical students, and I like it very much. I also have time to do research work and have just started to work for an M.Sc.

THE DRAGON WHO GOT TUMMY-ACHE

by Ariel Wilton, aged 8
(Practising School, Ambleside)

ONCE UPON A TIME in a cave in a wood lived a dragon and his name was Toddles because he had short stumpy legs.

He did not eat people but he used to go every day to a town called Dragonville and at the little shop he used to buy turnips, carrots, onions, three loaves of bread, buns, a cake and six bottles of milk and a pork pie, and sometimes gingerbread.

He had a neat little house (I mean cave) with a lovely bed with a white pillow and pink sheets, blue blankets and a pink and

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blue quilt. He had three armchairs that had green cushions and blue covers. He had two rugs and he always had a bright log fire in the hearth. In one corner of the room was a cupboard, in it were lots of Toddles' special things. There was a basin too, a pink one.

One day he ate a laurel leaf and he felt very ill, he had got a tummy ache and so he put on his linen pyjamas and got into his bed. Next day the doctor came, he gave Toddles some medicine to make him sick, after that he was much better, 'cos he had sicked up the laurel leaf. So Doctor Draggie let him get up, and put on his shirt and pants and jersey, and he went out. Everyone was waiting outside for him, they greeted him with, 'Three cheers for Toddles,' and then 'Hip hip' said the old chief Dragon Doodle, 'Hurrah' came the response. 'Hip hip,' 'Hurrah' again came the response. 'Hip hip' 'Hurrah!!' And that I am afraid is the end of the story. I hope Toddles does not get any more tummy-aches don't you? Toddles wanted to write a letter but it is his bedtime so I said firmly he could not.

Good-bye and that's the end.

MY PONY

by Gay MacInnes, aged 8
(Churcham County Primary
P.N.E.U. School)

I have a little pony.
I'm afraid she's rather bony.
But what does that matter?
She'll soon get fatter.

I'll give her some hay,
All through the day.
I'll groom her at night
And then she'll be bright.

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SKI-ING IN SWITZERLAND

by Frances Sweeny, aged 14
(P.N.E.U. School, Queen's Gardens,
W.2)

WHEN I ARRIVED in Switzerland it seemed almost unbelievable that while in England there was grey fog and freezing cold, in Switzerland there was brilliant sunshine and the air was only pleasantly cool.

Ystaad is only a very tiny village in the west of Switzerland, and fairly low so that the snow always arrives and melts later than in most parts of Switzerland. The snow in Switzerland is very different from that which we have in England for English snow is never very deep and melts easily, but in Switzerland snow can be two or more feet deep and remains hard and frozen, even while there is brilliant sunshine overhead.

The different kinds of snow make a great difference to the skier, for instance, in very deep soft snow it is very difficult indeed to move at all, also in deep soft snow which has only a thin crust on top. Hard very icy snow is the best for skiing because your skis glide very smoothly over the surface, if you are an experienced skier you can work up quite a lot of speed, but if you are not, you fall very, very easily!

You can learn to ski three ways; either with a guide privately, or in a school, or by yourself. The last way is rather unsatisfactory because when you fall, which you do a great deal, your skis seem to get quite inextricably entangled and unless there is a guide to help you up, you lie there with your legs waving, looking perfectly ridiculous until you release yourself!

In a ski-school you learn the correct way to go down a slope with your knees well bent and your body loose and supple. Then you learn how to turn and stop. The

master always does the thing first to show how it should be done, and then the pupils, generally about twenty in each class, do it after him one at a time. Another exercise is to put two ski-sticks in the snow at a distance of about a yard from each other, then to join the two at the tops with another stick. Then you have to try to go through it. I need not mention the dire calamities and shaming moments which you have to endure when first you do this!

When you are more experienced you can start going on trips to the more difficult mountains. It is generally better to go on the first one by yourself so that you can crawl gingerly down or fall down as often as you like without having anyone to witness this, one of Life's more humiliating moments! When I went up a mountain for the first time, at first I felt very proud of myself because I had not fallen at all. This happy state of mind lasted for a period of exactly one minute. Soon afterwards the track which I was following became just about one foot wide, with as many bends as an S and with several large boulders and rocks in the middle. I set my teeth grimly and started around a particularly large rock which was in my way, suddenly to my horror I heard the sound of whizzing skis and a small cheery voice which yelled, 'Achtung!' in my ear. There was no room to move so with braced muscles I waited for the crash. A few seconds later round a bend came shooting a small girl of two. Zoom! over the rock, over my head and with about a foot to spare she flashed, recovering her balance without a flicker of an eyelid. I gulped and staring after her flying figure pressed on. A minute later I heard another 'Achtung!' and round the bend following his sister came a small boy

of four. As if I were a blade of grass he also leaped over my prostrate form.

I did finally reach the bottom with a total of falls which I will not here repeat. One sad moral though I learnt from this, which I hereby pass on; 'Never, never, never bite off more than you can chew.'

COPPER

by Gillian Clegg, aged 10
(St. Ives P.N.E.U. School, Haslemere)

I WAS BORN in a smart pen. My mother was a well known winner at Crofts, my father was a good gun dog. There were six puppies, Pedigree Red Setters. We were very playfull and mischevous. In fact quite soon after I was born, I got into mischief. I was nosing round the pen one morning, when I came across a gap, so I crawled underneath it and came face to face with a cat. I had never seen a cat before, so naturally I was very frightened of those glaring eyes, and thought it was a strange monster, and I fled! After a bit I found my legs were aching and I was tired. But looking behind me, I saw a hen, (I did not know it was a hen) I thought it was another strange monster. In spite of my legs,

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I ran on, and splashed head first into a pond! When I came to the surface, I was very wet and covered with slime, and some white quacking creatures were hurrying away. I believe I would have drowned if my master had not been passing. He found a rope and another man. Then they pulled me out. I was very miserable, and then they put me back in the pen.

The next day two men came to see me, they talked a lot, and I heard from my mother that I was going to be trained. I decided I did not want to be trained, and I decided to be naughty. And I was! After a few days, my master took me away, and I heard from my family that I was too naughty and was going to be sold for a pet. After this my mother gave me a lot of good advice.

My new home was a nice one, I had plenty of friends (and enemys!) they were as follows: Judy, an old black cocker spaniel who was very wise; the family cats, Fenella and Stella, with whom I was great enemys; Starlit, the Irish pony, on to whose back I used to jump. Of course I must not forget my mistresses, Marion and Patricia. We had many adventures together, and once we were lost in the fog.

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NATURE



NOTEBOOK

Woodcut designed and executed by Susan Newby-Robson
(ex-pupil, P.N.E.U. School, Queen's Gardens, London).

NATURE NOTEBOOK SECTION

THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES from the Nature Notebooks of Parents' Union School children of different ages are given to show what stores of knowledge as well as joy are gained from these nature diaries. They are not written to be shown or examined. Indeed, Miss Charlotte Mason's advice in *Home Education* is that they should not be corrected. Each child has his or her own book of blank pages on which to paint and write (or dictate) something new found out of doors. It might be a beetle, or the first primrose of the year, or the date when the first willow warbler sang. A painting of a budding twig, with the date and the place where it grew entered beside it, is a complete nature note. As the days and then the years go on, each child, according to his taste, amasses facts on which to build unconscious comparisons: of one year with another, one locality with another, one climate with another. For to many the Nature Notebooks become life-long companions. It is so interesting to look back and be certain where the first uncommon flower, such as the blue pimpernel, was seen and whether it can be expected in what seems a similar situation. These extracts then are from genuine observations, written at the time, by persons who have turned their attention to living things.

A. C. DRURY (C.M.C.)

JANUARY

1st. *The Old Hall P.N.E.U. School, Hethersett, Norwich.*

On my window-sill of my bedroom I put some bread crumbs for the tits but when I looked out this morning I saw a robin.

There is a creeper out side my window too, and I put Monkey nuts on a piece of wire, and hang it on this creeper after two or three days they are all gone again.

On our lake we have got lots of birds we hadn't got any before these holidays we have got all different kinds there are, Herring Gulls, Common Gulls, Black backed Gulls, and Black-headed Gull. And there are lots of this years babies which are brown and won't be grey till next year. They seem to chase the grown-up ones off not the other way round.

ANN WATSON, aged 11.

18th. *Home Schoolroom, Norfolk.*

Yesterday Mummy and I went for a walk along Mr. Brame's way, and we heard a bird singing. We stopped and looked up. At first we could not see it in the grey sky. But then we saw a little black spot very high up. It was a skylark and we liked the singing of it, and we listened to it till it was out of sight.

LAWRENCE ARNITT WHITE, aged 6.

Quidhampton P.N.E.U. School, Basingstoke.

This time of year the birds can't get food. If you want them to come, the best way is to put some food on your bird table. Your nesting box should face north. The wren's egg is the tiniest it is rather like a Robins egg. You must not start to build the nest because the bird won't like it.

S. MAYBURY, aged 9.

30th. *Home Schoolroom, Derby.*

We woke up to find it was snowing, it kept on till about 9 a.m. After lessons we went out and found it was about 3 in. deep. In the afternoon we went round the wood and tracked a fox. He had come down from the wood, crossed the roadway and gone down through the rhododendrons to drink at the Lake. Finding it frozen fairly hard, he had run under the bushes, past the tunnel and had crossed the ice at the corner of the lake, gone across the grassy path to the water-wheel and into the bushes below to drink at the stream. Then the track led up to the road, not far from the ford; and back into the wood. We saw pheasant tracks, too, the cock pheasants had left lines on the snow where their tails had trailed.

JANE KATHERINE WALKER, aged 8.

FEBRUARY

1st. *Ambleside P.N.E.U. School, Cheam, Surrey.*

We went for a Nature Walk to Cheam Park and I found some Ash and some Sycamore, and Terence brought his pen-knife. I saw an Oak tree, and Anne Seaford found some Larch cones on a twig. It was a nice day. One tree we saw was crooked, and it had a hole in the crooked part, and another tree was growing through it, and the first tree had some tar on it. I found over five young Ash trees growing together. I found out that the Ash has black buds, the Elder dark red buds, the Horse Chestnut sticky brown buds, and the Dogwood clusters of black berries hanging down from red stalks. Eugene and Terence found some Holly. The Ash I found had a light brown stalk with little hairs on. The Sycamore had a thin dark brown stalk. On the way back we saw a young Oak with brown leaves under it. The tree was two feet high, very straight with a thin steady trunk.

JULIET CHAPLIN, aged 8.

11th. *Staff School, Ibadan, Nigeria.*

We went to the Forestry yesterday: we saw some flowers and a big leaf. We saw a snake bird. It had a long neck and it had a pointed mouth. It had long legs. It looked rather thin but he had a small head.

The Agbon (Mason Wasp): The mother wasp keeps some insects in the room. She sent them to sleep. She does not always bring the same insect. If the larva comes out it will eat all the insects. Sometimes she closes the door.

We went for a walk with Miss Plumptry. We saw some lilys and we went down by a river running by. We saw some crows (African Pied Crow) then when they saw us they flew away.

KOHN ADISIGBIN, aged 9.

17th. *P.N.E.U. School, Rickmansworth, Herts.*

On Thursday I saw two magpies, and they were on fir trees. Last year they made a nest on the other fir tree and I could not see it, because

February—continued

a branch covered it, but this year they are on the other tree and at the top the branches begin dividing off and from my room I can see it easily. Then suddenly one of the magpie's flew away, and came back with a bit of grass in its beak, and put it where the branches divide, and then they both went and came back with grass and twigs in their beak and put it in the same place, and so on. I thought it was very early, but I don't think they have finished.

February 26th. Sometimes I see the magpies with their nest, and once I saw one with a stick longer than itself in its beak. They are there today, and one of them is sorting out the nest and getting it tidy.

ROWENA SALMON, aged 10.

MARCH

2nd. Home Schoolroom, Tarma, Peru.

Off we went in our galloping bed-steed. That is our caravan. On our way we saw part of the desert covered with orange flowers. There was no water and they had no leaves and everywhere looked orange. We stopped at a nice beach and went for a walk with daddy, Edith and Ronny and saw a hairy sea plant and inside was a round red blob which the fishermen use for fishing.

Another beach we went to seemed to be beautiful but we soon found out that it was a wind swept desert. Every afternoon the wind blew the sand along at a tremendous rate. There were half-moon shaped sand-dunes. They keep moving as the wind keeps blowing the sand over the top of them. Sometimes they creep across the road and tractors have to come and clear them away. On this beach we saw a dead seal which had been washed ashore.

Another place we went we called Hope Bay. It was a nice place with rocky pools and little fish in them. We saw some lovely starfish. One had 35 legs, another had 5. The big one was reddish brown and the little one was pinkish. They had lots of little prickles which held on tightly to the rock. It was hard to get them off. There were lots of little lizards which ran among the rocks. They were the same colour as the rocks. Some fishermen came and caught huge fish off the rocks.

Our next bay had a lovely calm beach. It was

23rd. Desmoor P.N.E.U. School, Ewhurst, Surrey.

We have seen the Barn Owl flying about, I have mostly seen him flying about down by the fence near where the new football pitch is going to be. We went to the barn, where straw from the corn is stacked, borrowed into hay on the ground and found these pellets. A pellet is all the parts of the little animal that the Barn Owl does not digest, like the bones, teeth, claws and the fur. We pulled these pellets to bits and found jaws, the bones of legs, ribs, and the skull.

M. NICHOLSON, aged 9.

a port and big ships came in to take cotton and sugar and guano away. A petroleum tanker came in and pumped petroleum into tanks on the shore. One day a troop of boy scouts came ashore for a few hours. Every day the fishermen went out in their motor fishing boats and came back with loads of 'bonito' which were taken to a factory nearby and tinned and sold as Atun.

Our next beach was the loveliest of all. One day the sea was black because thousands of birds were flying past. A shoal of fish must have come along. Some of the fish were washed ashore and they were like tiny mackerel. These birds are known as the guano birds. Some pelicans were with them and on the shore were some tiny birds like wagtails. Between the thousands of birds and the shore some porpoises were playing somersaults. There was a lot of squaking. Before a huge wave broke we saw the outline of a porpoise, it was like a hoop.

Now we had to leave the sea and climb up over the Andes Mountains to our little home in Tarma. At the high mountain pass we saw the peaks covered with snow and glaciers. The height of the road was about 16,000 feet above the sea. It was snowing and very cold, and we had oxygen. We left the sea at 7 a.m. and got home at 6 p.m. The cold was terrible after the tropical coast. We got back safely, ready to start school again.

JEAN PATTON, aged 8.

March—continued

4th. Home Schoolroom, Hickling, Norfolk.

Yesterday I saw a Brimstone butterfly it was yellow, and had bright red spots. I saw a Coltsfoot it has lots of yellow single flowers, to make up a flower head. Something funny about the Coltsfoot is that it has no leaves when the flower is out, they follow after.

We picked some Pussy-Willow it is soft and grey, and has little brown cases for protection, Pussy-Willow grows in marshy places. The Great-Tit is a lovely bird it has a yellow breast, a green blue back and a black line down his breast. He is an acrobat, for he swings, and turns upside down.

SUSAN PERRY, aged 9.

6th. Home Schoolroom, Northumberland.

On the North-east coast of Northumberland there is a long stretch of land called Cullernose. It is covered with gorse bushes and clumps of bracken. Behind is Dunstanburgh Castle which is very old and is now in ruins. One sunny day I decided to go for a walk along by Cullernose. As I was walking along by the coast of Cullernose I caught a glimpse of Craster Village with Dunstanburgh Castle behind it. On the sea there were some eider ducks. Eider ducks are mainly seen on the Scottish and North-east coasts of England and are seen elsewhere as winter visitors. They are beautiful and interesting birds. The Drake is distinctive in his black and creamy-white plumage. The duck is brown and mottled under her chest. I also saw some oyster catchers. On my way home I noticed a few gulls on nests by the cliff quite near me. I also saw some homing pigeons fly over the sea.

When I arrived home I felt I had had a very interesting walk.

CAROL CARR-ELLISON, aged 10.

10th. Home Schoolroom, Tarma, Peru.

When we were on our holiday our caravan stuck in the sand. Daddy went off for some seawater and while he was going he found four fishermen and they dug the sand and pushed

the car and we got out of the soft sand onto a stony road. And we went on the stony road and then we came to a beach. We stayed there for seven nights and seven days. One night there was a terrible noise and mummy woke up with something running on her face. What do you think it was? A cheeky mouse! It was a field mouse. The next night we heard two. One night I found that one was nearly going in my mouth. We put all the food away. They bumped and banged about and rustled papers. We got used to the noise. One of them came all the way home to Tarma with us. Then daddy caught it with a cheesy trap. Our poor little friend.

EDITH PATTON, aged 6.

26th. St. Hilda's P.N.E.U. School, Bushey, Herts.

This morning I got up early and took Sally for a walk. I think this was the most interesting one I have ever had. As we were going round the corner of some woods a Badger came round. It made a funny snuffling grunt and went of over the field towards some trees. It had white eyes and a bushy tail. When we went home across some fields down by the river two snipes flew up. They had white chests and stomachs. One of them made a funny noise. They flew in zigzags across from the river down to the edge of another field.

JENNIFER WHELAN, aged 13.

P.N.E.U. School, Bournemouth, Hants.

We have several trees in our school garden. In one of them lives a squirrel. We call him Sammy. He loves watching our classes; every time we have a lesson indoors, he gnaws a fir-cone off the pine tree, sits down and eats it while he is watching us. When we have netball he jumps about from tree to tree just as though he was playing too. Sammy is very good at leaping, and I am sure he would win the long jump at our school sports.

JULIA TURPIN, aged 10.

APRIL

1st. *St. Margaret's P.N.E.U. School, Ludlow, Shropshire.*

Now Winter is ended
And Spring comes again
With sunshine and showers
And wind and soft rain.
When leaves clothe the bare trees
And flowers come out
Then Spring is the season
To sing and to shout.
The joy of the living
When Spring comes around
The birds and the insects
Their joy knows no bound.
The meadows grow greener
As sprouts start to shoot
Springing out of the earth
Up from their deep root.
The may blossoms brighter
On hedgerows so green
The crocus and snowdrop
Can always be seen.

ANNE BATTYE, aged 12.

9th. *St. Hilda's P.N.E.U. School, Bushey, Herts.*

This year all trees and flowers are later owing to bad weather. The birds building nests in hedges did not find much cover as the leaves were not out, but I did find a blackbird's nest in a hedge with five eggs in. A week later I went to look and found five pink baby birds with their beaks open asking for food. Later on I saw them flying. The two Moorhens on the pond have started building their nest on a fallen willow tree. The nest is made out of hay and dried grass. Up in our loft I found one short-eared bat and one long-eared bat. I had never seen bats close up to before and never thought that their wings were so transparent and so delicate. Our dog unearthed two hibernating hedgehogs. We covered one up with dried grass and leaves, the other seemed more adventurous and started to crawl away. It did not seem to mind being picked up, and drank the milk we gave it. This year has been a very good year for wild violets both white and light and dark blue. I never knew that rabbits liked to nibble primrose, cowslip and violet buds but I have seen them doing it. I have found one partridge nest with eight eggs in it.

JACQUELINE ARMSTRONG, aged 14.

29th. *Home Schoolroom, nr. Edenbridge, Kent.*

Once when our maid Mrs. B— came (she comes every Monday and Friday) when she was clearing the hall she saw a shadow moving backwards and forwards and she went out of the door to look to see what it was and there she saw a little wren's nest and that little wren's nest was just over the front door in the jasmine.

June 25th. For two whole months we did not see the little wren at all. We thought she didn't like the nest for all the noise that was in the house that was made by our little baby, but when my Mother found a broken egg on the window sill just below the nest and saw a cheeky little face poked through the door of the nest we knew the wren must have come back and was sitting.

July 11th. Fifteen days after that we spied Mr. Wren with a juicy fly in his beak flying towards the nest. We guessed then that the little wren was still sitting.

July 17th. We think the baby wrens must have hatched out by now because both Mother and Father Wren came with two enormous mouthfuls of flies.

July 20th. The Mother wren was making a noise like 'ticking' over our cat's head and the cat was in a furious rage because she couldn't catch it. Then one day (about three days after this) we saw three naughty little cheeky heads peering out of their nest just like their Mother. Then one must, I think, have hatched out before the others because he was braver and crawled out, upon the wall. He was very fluffy. I don't know what he thought of it I should think he thought his mother would look after him. We were very lucky and saw all the babies come out and fly away to the plum tree.

December 8th. The little wren sleeps in the nest it made at night. It has flown into the hall in the dark when friends come to tea.

December 27th. Here is the saddest bit of our story because one night when we were asleep about ten o'clock, our cat took one leap and down came the nest and she brought in the wren and as she couldn't see at that time of night to eat it she waited till the morning and in the morning when we came down to make the breakfast there under the kitchen table was the wren.

DIANA SUSAN BATCHEN, aged 7.

April—continued

Reed Barn P.N.E.U. School, Wingham, Kent.

When I was feeding the chickens a duck laid an egg on my foot.

In the morning I hear all the animal noises together.

When I bycling to Staple I caught a little rabbit but I let it go again.

Daddy's strawberry's have got alot of new green leaves.

When I stand at the top of the path I see the yew in blossom.

When the pigs have finished eating they have mealy noses.

JEMIMA JONES, aged 9.

MAY

1st. *Home Schoolroom, Haiti.*

The lizard, is of the crocodile family, the smallest I have seen was about two and a half inches long, and the biggest about one and half feet long. It moves along in jerks, and if you go near it, it runs away. They have fierce little eyes, we used to have plenty in the garden.

One day I saw a shell walking and it was a small crab without a hard shell on and when it grows too big for the shell he goes to find another shell.

ELIZABETH BERNARD, aged 9.

P.N.E.U. School, Jedburgh, Scotland.

Wherever we go we always have the sparrow with us: even in the crowded streets he is to be seen dashing down almost under the horses hoofs for scraps of food. There, he is a grimy little person, and you cannot see his colours for the smoke has dimmed them.

JILL STEWART, aged 7.

The starling's nest had blue eggs and it was in a hole in a tree and we could see it, from the window. There was a sparrow in the pig-sty we caught it and I let it away because it was not feeling well. I saw a whaup siting on the nest.

MARGARET ELLIOT, aged 6.

8th. *Revelstone P.N.E.U. School, Manley, Cheshire.*

We started our freshwater aquarium and stocked it with three crested newts and freshwater snails. The aquarium, a large glass tank, was prepared beforehand. The bottom was covered with silver sand with a stone for shade in one corner, and water weeds anchored near by. The snails soon started grazing round the sides of the tank.

May 9th. We put some duckweed and starwort on the surface of the water to provide food and shade for the creatures.

May 12th. The water snails had laid bags of jelly eggs and fastened them onto the duckweed, and to the large stone.

May 15th. We found a Dragon-fly larva in Ashton Brook and put it into a separate Aquarium. Then we all took turns in feeding it on freshwater shrimps, tadpoles and microscopic pieces of meat.

May 16th—June 2nd. The larva shed its skin three times during this period. It seemed to have definite times of rest when it would cling to a reed and remain motionless for hours. At other times it would start into action and dart through the water seeking its prey. It grew larger visibly and we would watch it fascinated. Like some monster of the deep it would seem to peer at us through the glass sides of the aquarium, and once while we watched its mask or lower lip shot out and caught a passing tadpole. It gripped the tadpole with its mandibles and sucked out the soft parts discarding the rest. As the time drew near for its transformation we could see the rudimentary wings lying folded under the transparent skin. Of what did it dream in those moments before its birth in the watery depths? Could it have imagined for one moment the wonderful creature it would become? Or the jewels on its head, and those exquisite wings, so delicate, so perfect, yet capable of strong swift flight?

July 5th. Supported by a long stick which came up above the sides of the aquarium, the Dragonfly emerged from its Nymph case on this date. It was a most exciting moment to watch. It crawled slowly up the reed, then turning a complete somersault it jerked away from its Nymph case until it was free. It stayed resting

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May—continued

and dried itself. After an hour the full beauty of the wings was apparent. The beautiful creature climbed on to the window-sill and we measured its wing span, five inches from tip to tip. The colours were green and black with iridescent wings with a small patch of metallic green on each wing tip.

July 6th. We lifted the Dragonfly onto a reed and very carefully took it down to the lily-pond where we released it. It immediately flew away with a tremendous whirr of wings rising, higher and higher till it climbed over the tree-tops and disappeared from view.

July 12th. A green and black dragonfly was seen by the lily-pond. Was it ours returned to its old haunts again?

[The water creatures were collected, watched and fed by pupils aged 3—6.]

15th. St. Hilda's P.N.E.U. School, Bushey, Heris.

The oak tree's flowers are just out. There are two kinds of oak, the pedunculate, and the

sessile oak. The pedunculate is most common. It has stalks to the female, or pistilate, pink flowers, while the sessile oak flowers grow straight out of the twig. Also this applies to the acorns too, while the leaves contradict it, having long stems on the sessile, and short ones, or none at all, on the pedunculate oak.

The leaves of the pedunculate oak, have 'ears' or auricles at the bottom, while the sessile leaves go straight at the bottom. The little pink female flowers can be found in the middle of the leaves at the top of the twig. The staminate flower is not unlike a catkin. It has tiny bunches of flowers growing alternately down the stalk. It has a 'greeny-yellow' flower. On the oak tree that I saw there were two things that I particularly noticed. The first was that there were hardly any female pink flowers. Also I found an oak gall. The oak gall was made by a insect laying an egg inside the stalk. It is a little round transparent ball, with speckles of red on it. I split it into two, and found it to be solid jelly with what might have been a stone inside. It grows on the stalk of the male flower.

KATRINA LUTWYCHE, aged 11.

JUNE

4th. Peakland P.N.E.U. School, Buxton, Derbyshire.

We have got a Willow-warbler's nest in our garden. It had got 5 eggs in it. The eggs are a whitish brown with deeper brown spots on it. The nest was built like a little cup and was carefully covered over with dry grass and the grass that was growing round.

VIVIEN ALCOCK, aged 9.

8th. Fairfield House P.N.E.U. School, Hampshire.

The swallows in our garage have a nest that is ten years old. In the gale it fell down and five baby day-old swallows died. Now the old birds are making it up again. I found a baby bird and gave it some hen food and some water and took it back and its mother came and took it away.

A Fly Catcher has build a nest in an old band off the pump, hanging on the outside wall of the

house. Three babies hatched out . . . On June 25th they flew about 7.30 a.m.

ALISON CARR, aged 9.

Home Schoolroom, Exmoor.

This year, 1950, there have been an exceptional number of cuckoos around here, and we have found the pretty bright blue eggs of the little Hedge-sparrows lying at the foot of one or two hedges, unbroken mostly—and a pair of cuckoos flying frequently over a nearby quarry and gorsebushes. Then, one day, a sunny afternoon in early June, we saw, a few yards away and coming directly towards and past us a group of three birds, each of a different size.

They were flying in the direction of the old quarry. To our astonishment, we found the large leading-bird to be an adult cuckoo, while to one side and behind her came a baby cuckoo (large enough to be flying easily) and on the

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June—continued

other side of the parent-cuckoo came a tiny foster-parent Hedge-sparrow. There was no sign of unfriendliness or of fright in their attitude, they just seemed to be winging their way on a journey to some definite spot, and being so close to us, each bird was seen most distinctly in the warm afternoon sunshine. It pleased us greatly to find that after all, a parent cuckoo *does* take a little interest in its babies!

MARY-ROSE STEPHENSON, aged 14.

16th. St. Hilda's P.N.E.U. School, Bushey, Hertfordshire.

On Monday June 12th we went to Tring and onto the Chiltern Hills, the country round about Tring is famous for its flowers, the earth is made up of chalk. We found Fly Orchids and one Bee Orchis, the fly orchid looks just like a fly, there are about four flowers on one stalk, the flower is a purplish brownish colour. The Bee Orchis is brighter in colour than the Fly.

We also found Bladder Campion, this is white, the seed box is very fat, it is also white but it has a pink line in it. We found one bush of Dewberry, the flower looks very like a Blackberry.

We found Cathartic flax, it is a very small Stitch Wort. The corn fields were full of poppies and with the green corn it looked very pretty. We found Clustered Bellflower this is a purple flower with a yellow centre, it has five petals joined into one in a trumpet shape.

We also found False Brome, this is a grass with dark brown stamens. Hoary Plantain has very pale yellow stamens and is bigger than the common plantain. We found three different kinds of Milk Wort, one was purple, one was white and the other was pink, then we found Marjoram and Tyme these two smelt very sweet.

Then we found Burnet, Buxbaum speedwell, changing forget-me-not, this is blue then turns yellow. Charlock, Dog Wood, Field Brome, Funit Fescue. Horse shoe Vetch, this is a little yellow flower. Herb Robert. Ladies Fingers, this is a yellow flower like a large clover. Ladies mantle. Mouseear, Meadowpea, mignonette, corn Pansy, and quaker grass. Rock roses, these are little yellow flowers growing close to the ground.

There were a lot of dog roses in the lanes, Rib Wort Plantain and Rough dogs tail.

Salad Burnet, Sainfoin, Spurry, Squinacy Wort, Silver Weed, this has silver leaves and a yellow flower. Field Cerasium, scarlet pimpernel, yellow stone crop, Sand Wort, Wild Strawberry Spindle, White Helleborine belongs to the Orchid family.

Wood sanicle, Wood avens, wood ruff, white Bryony, White Beam, White Campion and Wound Wort.

Then in the train home we saw fox gloves.

JULIA BROWNE, aged 14.

Home Schoolroom, Haiti.

I found a nice piece of coral, one day, in the sea. I use it now as a paper weight. Here, in Haiti, we do not have coloured coral. This coral is white with thick, white lines. In between these bigger lines are small thin lines, lower than the big lines, with lots and lots of tiny branches, which just go from those medium sized lines to the big lines. I find coral looks like a maze. Coral is made up of hundreds of tiny animal's skeletons. This kind is called the brain coral. We have found another peice, which we think is coral. It has tiny round cells. Some of it, behind is covered with some white stuff. The coral is white.

ARLETTE MYRA BERNARD, aged 12.

Home Schoolroom, Brazil.

I was resting one day, and I heard the maids running out because the gardener called them to go and see something. Under a tree near the fence there was a snake swallowing a little black bird. First it rolled itself round it, and then it started swallowing it's head and then, after it had swallowed it's head, it came to the wings. Then he started on the right wing first. After it had swallowed the right wing it swallowed the left wing. After it had swallowed the left wing, it swallowed it's legs. After it had swallowed it's legs, the gardener hit it with a hoe and the bird shot out, and the snake came for the gardener, although it had a big hole in it's side. The mother and the father came and pecked at it whilst it was swallowing the little bird. The snake was a cotiara.

JOHN DANIEL LANDERS, aged 6.

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JULY

18th. *The Old Hall P.N.E.U. School, Hethersett, Norwich, Norfolk.*

On Saturday we went for a trip to Blakeney Point; we went to Morston by bus, and from there we went by boat out to the Point; first we had to go along a small channel, and then we got out into an inlet of the sea; in the channel we saw many birds including some small Dunlin, standing on a mud bank, but they flew away after a little time; in the inlet of the sea, we saw a family of sheld-ducks and drakes.

We soon arrived at Blakeney, and among the stones on the beach, we saw many plants, including Sea-Pink, Sea-Lavender, Sea Milkwort, and Sea Campion; then we went and had lunch among the sand dunes, which were covered with Marram Grass, to keep them together; when we went down to paddle we noticed some worm holes, which were the holes of worms which are very good for fishing. After that, we all went to the house, to listen to a short lecture about the birds, told by Reginald Gaze, the bird-watcher, it was very interesting, and he showed us lots of stuffed birds, and a stuffed weasel; after that we went out to the point, and we saw lots of baby birds running all over the place, also some eggs; then as it had started to rain we went back to the hut; then when it had cleared up we practised playing rounders in a small valley, with a small plant with little pink flowers on it covering the ground; then we went back to the hut for tea, and then went home.

MARION TRACEY, aged 11.

Home Schoolroom, Nigeria.

There were lots of birds in Samaru. There were kingfishers, lots of little red finches called fire-finches, pied crows, hawks, a bird called a plantain-eater, vultures which were scavengers and a lot of other different kinds. We had a family of kingfishers living in our garden. They were bigger than the ones here (England) and lived on insects and grasshoppers. They had bright orange beaks and their plumage was bright blue. Bush fowls and guinea fowls were very common and used to make a noise in the garden. They did not fly very much but only when getting away from an enemy.

The fire finches lived on grass seeds and came hopping around the lawns in flocks with many other kinds of little birds. The pin-tailed whydah is about the size of a fire finch and the male is black and white, with a long tail about

9 inches long and very thin. In the breeding season, he dances over his wife and doesn't allow any other bird in the tree but when the breeding season is over, he loses his tail feathers. His wife stays brown all the time.

MARTIN KING, aged 8.

Home Schoolroom, Northumberland.

A wild duck's nest was found with eight lovely large greenish yellow eggs in it. We took four, brought them home and put them under a hen. In a fortnight they hatched. We had to keep wetting the nest as a wild duck's nest is very moist. Suddenly one morning we noticed a tiny triangle crack on the top of an egg. At the end of twelve hours four little heads were peeping out and four little beaks were going squeak, squeak. At the end of twenty-four hours egg-shells were placed on one side neatly packed into one another. After they had had a good sleep and dried off we took them out into the sun, they ate a little and popped in and out of the pond. Mother hen tried to teach them how to scratch but they paid not the slightest attention but put their heads on one side and took running jumps into the pond.

GILLIAN RANDALL SMITH, aged 16.

Burgess Hill P.N.E.U. School, Sussex.

The Heron, a noble bird, is to be found all over the United Kingdom; wherever there are lakes with fish, there is usually a Heron. It is a large bird, 37 inches long, its plumage looks very grey, when it stands motionless at the edge of a lake, or on the top of a fir tree. It has a white forehead, head, and neck with black markings and a trailing black crest. It has a stout yellow bill (which it uses when it is standing, with its neck drawn in and its head sunk between its hunched-up shoulders) to stab at an unsuspecting fish, kill it, and carry it to the bank, where the Heron will pick the flesh from the bones of the fish, and eat it.

The flight of the Heron is slow but deliberate and the strokes are so powerful that the speed obtained is considerable. When flying the head of this bird is drawn and the long legs trailed.

The claw of the middle toe of the Heron has a serrated edge, with which the bird preens itself. On its breast, the Heron has a patch of blue down feathers, which it taps with its bill, and spreads it all over its body.

July—continued

The nests are usually in a colony, huge platforms with shallow cups, in the branches of large trees. By the middle of February or early in March four or five green-blue eggs are laid. A week or two later the herony is very much alive.

The hungry call of the nestlings sounds like this — 'tac, tac, tac,' rather the same as the roosting cry of the blackbird.

ANN FAWSETT, aged 13.

AUGUST

P.N.E.U. School, Bournemouth, Hampshire.

There are very few things that I have seen more beautiful than the Aurora Borealis. It was one evening in Frinton during our Summer Holidays, when looking out of the window I watched the waves lapping on the edge of the shore. Looking up to the sky I saw that it was beginning to change colours. In the North it was pink, in the South a blue-grey and in the East and West a rich deep toned red. Soon the sea began to change to these beautiful colours. Fascinated, I saw that it had begun to rain, glittering drops of pearl turning the scene a bright clean colour. Arching over the bay and disappearing into the distance was a rainbow. Following it with my eyes I saw that it rose higher over the middle of the bay. Just where it rose the highest I saw the most amazing thing.

On the horizon there used to be a solid grey cement lighthouse now so transformed that I could not recognize it. It reminded me of a fairy palace made of rubies shining so brightly that I could not look at it for very long. And then a crystal-like object flashed through the sky, turning red as it drew nearer to the fairy palace. Looking down at the sea, resembling a lake of jewels, I thought what a lot some people had missed having never seen the Aurora Borealis.

DEIDRE WOOF, aged 15.

Home Schoolroom, Exmoor.

High on a 'down' near the heathery hills of Exmoor, stand our old gipsy caravans, under the lee of a thick beech hedge, where we live summer and winter, among the curlews and lapwings!

One sunny day in late summer (about August 28th, 1949) my mother and I were sitting sewing on the step of our revolving summer house (which we use as a school-room) when suddenly, something flashed past us at a sharp slant from the sky, going towards the hedge behind us.

Full of curiosity and a bit startled, we jumped up and went to investigate! and there tangled

up in the spokes of our bicycle wheel (the bicycle leaning against the hedge, over a mouse hole) was a Hawk of some sort, which we thought must be either a young Buzzard or an adult Sparrow-hawk! (We afterwards found it was a female Kestrel.)

Quickly, my mother ran and caught it in her bare hands in spite of its fierce-looking beak and talons — her excitement making her forget their sharpness! Gently she smoothed its ruffled feathers and folded down its pointed wings, and together we looked with admiration and some awe at this beautiful creature of the skies, seen at such very close quarters, undamaged and alive. Knowing that we might never have such a chance again, we looked at every detail, partly to identify, partly to remember it. Her head and back were of a lovely light chestnut hue, her wings chestnut with black tips, tail barred with black. Her talons and legs were bright clear yellow, with shining black claws, so neat and polished looking! Yellow too, was her beak and the rims of her eyes, which were the most beautiful I have ever seen, — being large and of a deep lustrous black, with a liquid softness about them, which one would not expect to find in a hawk, and the yellow rims set them off to perfection.

It was wonderful how it sat so quietly with its claws wrapped round my mother's fingers as if it were sitting on a branch. My mother said it was because the bird was so frightened, poor creature. It kept looking so longingly up at the sky, that, much as we would have liked to have let Daddy see it in the evening, we felt it would be cruel to keep it captive any longer. So my mother walked slowly onto the lawn, and removed her hand from its back. For a minute it sat quite still on her fingers looking majestically round, then, as if realising suddenly, that it was no longer a captive (and giving a quick look at my mother first) it took off with a strong push, sailing across the down, a free creature once more!

MARY-ROSE STEPHENSON, aged 14.

SEPTEMBER

6th. Home Schoolroom, Haiti.

One morning I saw a Humming-bird on the verandah railing, it was grey with a greyish green back, head and wings. A few seconds later it flew off to the creeper flowers. It flew from one to another putting its beak in the middle of the flowers. But it never stopped fluttering its wings which made a whirring sound.

ARLETTE MYRA BERNARD, aged 12.

Home Schoolroom, Southern Rhodesia.

The Black-and-crimson shrike: This bird is striking and unmistakable, and about the size of a thrush. It inhabits dry, thorny veldt, and is rather uncommon. Its call-notes are a loud 'plp, plp, plp.' The nest is small and cup-shaped, and the eggs are three or four, white thickly spotted with brown. The young birds have no crimson at first. They are lively birds, and show up very well against the drab coloured thorn-bushes.

MARGARET PAGET, aged 11.

Selwyn House P.N.E.U. School, New Zealand.

My Grandfather has a farm in the North Island and we go up there for the holidays. There is a lovely native bush on it. Some time ago before my Grandfather had the farm there was a large area covered by beautiful Kaihikateo trees but many had been cut down as a large sawmill had been established there. The sawmill had cut the bush in many places but was taken out some years ago.

The former owner let his cattle wander in and out among the bush and they destroyed some of the trees. Now it has been fenced off and allowed to grow.

On one side grow hydrangeas, Rhododendrons and native shrubs. We find that supplejacks are quite a menace as they often damage the trees and we often pull them down as we pass through.

On one side there was a marsh but it has all been drained now and a pond has been dug. Last time we saw it there were ducks on the pond and one of them had just had six dear little ducklings. There is an orchard on the other sunny side and we get good fruit from it. It is very still and quiet inside the bush. Lovely ferns grow beside you and the trees are cool and shady. I am often woken up by the birds singing in the trees.

GILLIAN FLETCHER, aged 12.

Home Schoolroom, Barnet, Hertfordshire.

The main Barnet—St. Albans road runs along the London clay, and at South Mymms roads run off North and South, Black Horse Lane being just to the north.

It runs across: clay; sand and pebbles (Reading Beds); Chalk; Gravel; Chalk; Reading Beds, and London Clay at the beginning of the woods.

Till reaching the stream which runs under the road, the ground is flat each side, over Reading Beds and Chalk; but the stream has gravel banks of about three feet high.

After this, there are grassed over pits on each side of the road, and the banks rise to at least twelve feet, showing the different formations.

But we saw no Chalk, and collected from the Reading Beds—sand, with quartz and flint pebbles; and from the clay, sticky clay.

On the right a deep gully runs in at right angles with large rolled pebbles.

The steep banks of London Clay were extremely slippery. On the banks grew wine-coloured Dogwood; bright yellow Maple bushes; russet-leaved Oaks; crimson Blackberry trails; pale yellow Plum; greenish-yellow Elms; scarlet, crimson and gold Hawthorn, and tall bleached grasses about five feet high.

GILLIAN THOMAS, aged 10.

Home Schoolroom, Tikö, British Cameroons.

One Thursday afternoon my father took us to Mafanga farm on the motor trolley. When we got there we heard the African workers shouting because the elephants had gone there.

We got off the trolley and walked through the banana plants. We saw, ahead of us, four elephants; a father, mother, and two babies. The babies were playing around, pulling up weeds and knocking the soil into heaps with their little trunks.

But the bull elephant was waving his trunk in the air and shaking his big ears because he was angry. He was moving about tearing down bananas and breaking up plants and branches with his heavy feet. We think he knew we were there for he kept looking our way in a fierce manner, as if he were saying, 'Don't dare to come any nearer.' We had to keep one hundred feet away as we could see his long, sharp tusks.

RIKKY & KENNY MORRIS, aged 10 & 8.

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The Black and Crimson Shrike by MARGARET PAGET, aged 11 (Home Schoolroom, Rhodesia).

OCTOBER

Home Schoolroom, Kenya.

On this farm, which lies between 7,000 and 7,500 feet and ten miles north of the equator there is an enormous variety of birds. Some are useful, some are ornamental, some are just a nuisance, but all are very interesting.

CARRION EATERS. Of these we have vultures. These birds are ugly when sitting on tree tops but when in the air, wheeling and gliding about, are rather graceful. They are very useful because they eat the decayed meat of dead animals.

BIRDS OF PREY. Of these we have eagles, hawks and harriers. These birds are useful too for they eat the destructive things such as rats, moles, mice and pigeons. Occasionally they take a chicken. They are very strong and graceful and swift in flight.

PESTS. *Bulbuls:* These birds are fruit-eaters. They are grey brown with yellow underparts, head and tail black. They have sharp beaks. *Mouse birds:* They are also great fruit eaters. They are brown and dull looking, with grey crests and very long tails. They go round in flocks. Their movement as they creep about in trees is very mouse-like. The covering on their chests is like fur.

WEAVER BIRDS. These birds make nests hanging from trees or from long grasses which they tie together. They are made of grass interwoven. The inside is lined with down. The nests hang down without any support underneath. The entrance is at the side away from the wind. A lot of birds like to build together. The weavers we have are yellow and black.

GAME BIRDS. *Guinea fowl:* The ones we have live in the forest. They are grey with white spots with a slightly curved horn coming out of the head. They have a very curious long carrying call. *Francolin:* These are very beautiful. They are brown with white spots. I once found some eggs and set them under a hen. Only one hatched. He was always very shy and stayed with the chickens but now he lives in a thicket as they like to stay under cover.

AMUSING-LOOKING BIRDS. *Hornbills:* These birds often stay on trees around our house where they eat seeds. They are black with white wings. They have a very long, large bill with a knife-like casque on the top of it. They are noisy birds. *Crested Cranes:* Recently in the early

morning we have seen a couple of these gleaning off wheat. They have a very funny call and are very beautiful but it is this call that makes them so comical. They stand about three feet off the ground. They nest in marshes. They have very long legs and a beautiful crown made of coloured feathers. They like to be near water. In the evening they often fly over in flocks making a raucous call. *Secretary Bird:* This bird is about three feet high. He looks as though he is wearing a white shirt, a grey coat, and black trousers. He has quills sticking out of the back of his head which give him his name. They eat snakes.

GREEN PARROTS. Of all the beautiful birds on the farm best of all I like the parrots. They are green with the tips of the wings red. There is also red on the head. They have very curved beaks. They fly around in flocks making a terrific noise. They look very funny as they climb about using their beaks or when standing on one leg holding a twig with the other and eating seeds off it. They love olive and podo seeds and we have many of these around the house. They have a very shrill cry and when a flock flies over scolding, the noise is quite deafening.

LOURIES. The one we have is a large bird with a long tail. It is black shot with green. They do not look very interesting while jumping about in a tree like a monkey, but when they fly the flash of bright red of the underwing is lovely.

WHYDAH BIRDS. These are beautiful birds with their long tails streaming out behind as they fly low down. Usually one male is with lots of females. He dances around showing off and flattening a ring in the long grass as he bounces up and down. The tail of the male is about three times the length of his body.

SUNBIRDS. These are beautiful little birds usually very brightly coloured. As they hover about amongst the flowers and when they dip their long curved beaks right into the flowers to take the nectar they are very lovely to watch.

BLUE BREASTED WAX BILLS. I know these birds well because the often come and eat the chicken food. They have blue breasts with their backs buff. The females have a bare red patch on the cheek.

October—continued

CAPE ROBINS. These little birds are grey blue with a slightly lighter colour underneath. They have a white ring round the eye. They come and sit on a post outside then suddenly they swoop into the air, catch a fly, and get back onto the post.

SHRIKES. These birds are black and white. They catch insects and impale them on thorns. They are also called Butcher Birds.

We have many more such as doves, white eyes, starlings, owls, quails, plovers, snipe, hammerkop. In the hotter part of the farm are found rollers and others.

After a shower of rain all the birds start singing and it is very lovely.

CHARLES KEAN, aged 9.

9th. *St. Hilda's P.N.E.U. School, Bushey, Hertfordshire.*

On our Nature Walk this week we went out especially to look for different kinds of seeds, e.g. achenes, nuts, capsular fruits and schizocarps, for the ackenes conkers for capsular fruits we found Love-in-the-Mist (a capsule), shep-

herd's purse a siligua, for nuts we found hazel nuts. We also saw lots and lots of toadstools all round the roots of the trees. On Sunday we went in the car to Burnham Beeches, there we saw a tree that was covered with toadstools which from a distance looked like a beard, and closer two a wierd miniature forest.

23rd. Four new things that I have found this afternoon are, the fruits of the deadnettle and wound wort which are in little pockets with five spikes, the seeds split up into four, which is a thing I had not noticed before. I found the seeds of the Mallow which are exactly like the seeds of the Hollyhock. I found that the seeds of the Hombeam are very pretty little things, the planes grow brown and the little pointed fruits are left green. Also we found a most lovely umbel of Hogweed seeds. The Black Bryony berries are very lovely and look very lucious, so I do not wonder children are tempted to eat them. The oak trees are covered with spangle galls which are beginning to fall off now and the ground is scattered with tiny little pale green discs.

ALISON PRITCHETT, aged 14.

NOVEMBER

P.N.E.U. School, Zanzibar.

Chake Chake is a town in the middle of the island of Pemba, and a few miles south of Chake a foot-path leads to a very dark and gloomy pool surrounded by rocks and overhanging trees. It was there I met the fish. I didn't go alone because the natives say it is a sacred fish and they do not like it if you go without permission from the head man of the district. This head man went with us and carried a basket of food for the fish.

When we got there our guide rippled the water with his hand and called out, 'Mwinyi kuu, Mwinyi kuu, Bwana Mashungi. Bwana Mashungi, njoo, kula,' which means, 'Great one, great one Mashungi, Mashungi, come and eat.' Mashungi is its name. After a few seconds we saw a long fish coming out from under a rock and he came right to the bank. We could see at least five feet of him, but his tail remained under the rock.

He was putty colour with dark brown spots. He had a long dorsal fin. His face was rather like a squashed ball not at all pointed, and on his upper lip he had two bunches of whiskers. I thought at first they were two teeth.

The Sheha, as the headman is called, told me to feed him and very frightenedly I took a hen's egg out of his basket and held it out to the fish. With one gulp and a slithery sound the egg was gone. He ate three eggs and a half-a-pound of liver. This seemed to satisfy him and he disappeared once more under the rocks.

All the Swahilis in Pemba say that Bwana Mashungi is sacred. They come to him and pray when they are in trouble, or if they want children. He has been there for many years.

At night, it is supposed to turn into a very beautiful woman, and if you sit by the pool you may watch her, but if you attempt to touch her you become mad.

MEGAN TIDBURY, aged 10.

November—continued

Home Schoolroom, Tobago, British West Indies.

Tobago is in the West Indies and is much hotter than England. My Father has a coconut and cocoa estate. Coconuts are picked by a man who climbs the tree. It has no branches, so he has to climb the trunk with a rope round his waist. Another man chops them open with a cutlass and women pull out the copra with their knives or hands. My Father has a jeep and fetches the copra every day at half-past four and brings it into the works. There the copra is put on trays and is pushed out in the sun to dry next morning. When it is dried it is put in bags and sent on a boat to the island of Trinidad. In Trinidad it is made into oil or soap. The people here use the oil for cooking and the soap for washing.

The cocoa grows in pods which change colour as they get ripe — some go red and others yellow. The pods grow on any part of the tree, even the trunk. Men pick the pods when they are ripe with a knife on the end of a bamboo stick and then they are put on the ground in a pile and the women come and cut them open and take the seeds out, which have white mess on the outside. The cocoa is put in boxes and is sweated till the white mess dries off. Then the cocoa is put on trays and dried in the sun every day until it is brown. Then it is polished by people dancing on it with bare feet. (They are black people.) Then it is sent to England and made into chocolate.

There is a place by the sea called Pigeon Point and we go every Sunday to fish and swim there. We catch barracudas, sharks and cava li and other fish. It is dangerous to swim further out than the reef which goes across the Pigeon Point

bay where we fish. We collect conk-shells and sea-fans there.

We are about twenty miles from Scarborough which is the capital. The only other town is Roxborough, where we lived, but there are big villages. There is a village called Plymouth and when the English fleet came to Tobago they anchored there, and I went on the 'Duke of York.'

We fish in the rivers on the estate and catch mullet, crawfish and addreys. We have alligators in the rivers and my Father shoots them with a revolver because they are dangerous and might eat you or bite your dog's leg off.

We get beautiful flowers, such as ahthurim lilies, bougainvillia, exoras, zinnias, hibiscus. There is a tree called the Imortelle, which has flowers on it that are pinkish and red. They bloom all over the hills and make the hills look as if they are on fire.

There are no poisonous snakes here, but there are scorpions which bite you if they are angry and taratual spiders. My mother skins boaconstrictors and she makes things out of them like bags, belts and so on.

Mahogany trees are made into furniture by our carpenter. All around our house are cedar trees.

We have blue birds here and humming-birds and other sorts of birds called yellow-tails, King of the Woods, and woodpeckers; and pigeons and cocoricos which we eat.

There are red squirrels in the cocoa. We had two as pets. We also had an armadillo but it died because we couldn't get enough ants for it to eat. We have four dogs and we had a parrot who talked.

BRUCE ARCHIBALD, aged 7.

DECEMBER

20th. *Home Schoolroom, British Honduras.*

We came over in December of last year. Daddy came to show the people how to grow Bananas. He has to plant thousands of acres of Bananas so that the children in England can have more Bananas than they are getting now.

Some of the grapefruit that you get in England is grown here too, and there is a factory for canning the juice.

There are many kinds of wild animals here

that they don't have in Jamaica — Tigers, Mountain-Cows, Wild Pigs, Deer, Antelope and so many of the smaller ones that I cannot name them. There are many kinds of snakes here too and some are poisonous. Two of the labourers have been bitten, but they did not die.

B.H. is very much like Jamaica but I think it is a little colder in the winter months and more hot in the summer.

CAROLYN McHARDY, aged 8.

December—continued

28th. Home Schoolroom, Northumberland.

The cold spell began on December 18th. I have never seen a river freezing before, first the ice collected round the stones then gradually the ice grew together and then it froze over except the main stream which is never frozen over, in some places you could see the ice had risen about one foot, so it looked like the block-ice except for the colour of the water, then we had a fall of snow and you could see the animals foot tracks on the snow for instance Mummy showed us a tail mark, and prints of rabbits and sheeps and dogs and humans. Then there came a thaw and we went away and when we came back it had frozen again, the day we came back we had snow again, this time about six inches and 30° of frost so of course the pipes froze. The Windburn was frozen and the Lynn was covered with icicles, it had icicles about three feet wide and five feet long and they looked perfectly lovely and the snow plough was on the road. The cold weather has brought a lot of birds to the bird table. I even saw a nuthatch which is quite rare in some places. It was so frosty the other day that my hair turned quite white and my nose froze inside and it is still like that now and we are going to skate this afternoon.

JANE SMITH, aged 11.

Home Schoolroom, England.

Sea Horses

When the storm waves dash up the beach,
And the Sea-gulls wheel and cry,
The little grey horses from the sea
Come galloping swiftly by.

Their manes and tails streaming out,
Tossing their heads with glee;
They gallop across the smooth firm sands,
Along by the raging sea.

Dashing under the towering rocks,
Jumping the boulders grey,
With wet green sea-weed round their necks
And flecked with the white sea-spray.

Oh how good to be alive!
Oh to be galloping free!
Oh to be a wild sea-horse!
To dash by the raging sea.

MARION GLASSCOE, aged 12.